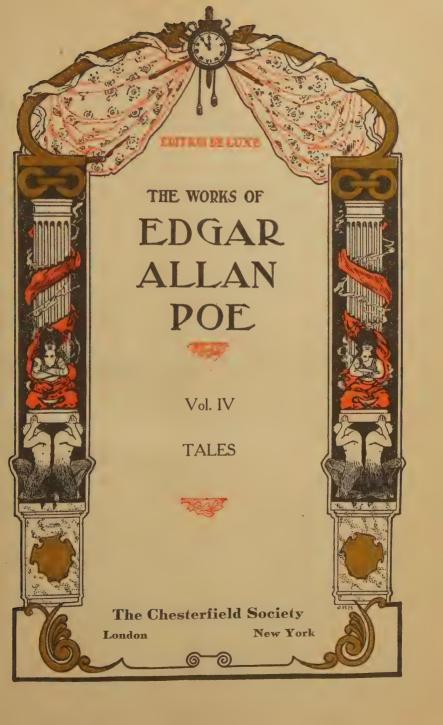




THE RAVEN



EDITION DE LUXE

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE POEMS, 1849 EDITION

THESE trifles are collected and republished chiefly with a view to their redemption from the many improvements to which they have been subjected while going at random "the rounds of the press." I am naturally anxious that what I have written should circulate as I wrote it, if it circulate at all. In defence of my own taste, nevertheless, it is incumbent upon me to say that I think nothing in this volume of much value to the public, or very creditable to myself. Events not to be controlled have prevented me from making, at any time, any serious effort in what, under happier circumstances, would have been the field of my choice. With me poetry has been not a purpose, but a passion; and the passions should be held in reverence; they must not—they cannot at will be excited, with an eye to the paltry compensations, or the more paltry commendations, of mankind.

E. A. P.



THE POETIC PRINCIPLE.

N speaking of the Poetic Principle, I have no design to be either thorough or profound. While discussing, very much at random, the essentiality of what we call Poetry, my principal purpose will be to cite for consideration, some few of those minor English or American poems which best suit my own taste, or which, upon my own fancy, have left the most definite impression. By "minor poems" I mean, of course, poems of little length. And here, in the beginning, permit me to say a few words in regard to a somewhat peculiar principle, which, whether rightfully or wrongfully, has always had its influence in my own critical estimate of the poem. I hold that a long poem does not exist. I maintain that the phrase, "a long poem," is simply a flat contradiction in terms.

I need scarcely observe that a poem deserves its title only inasmuch as it excites, by elevating the soul. The value of the poem is in the ratio of this elevating the excitement. But all excitements are, through a psychal necessity, transient. That degree of excitement which would entitle a poem to be so called at all, cannot be sustained throughout a composition of any great length. After the lapse of half an hour, at the very utmost, it flags—fails—a revulsion ensues—and then the poem is, in effect,

and in fact, no longer such.

There are, no doubt, many who have found difficulty in reconciling the critical dictum that the "Paradise Lost" is to be devoutly admired throughout, with the absolute impossibility of maintaining for it, during perusal, the amount of enthusiasm which that critical dictum would demand. great work, in fact, is to be regarded as poetical. only when, losing sight of that vital requisite in all works of Art, Unity, we view it merely as a series of minor poems. If, to preserve its Unity-its totality of effect or impression—we read it (as would be necessary) at a single sitting, the result is but a constant alternation of excitement and depression. After a passage of what we feel to be true poetry, there follows, inevitably, a passage of platitude which no critical pre-judgment can force us to admire; but if, upon completing the work, we read it again; omitting the first book—that is to say, commencing with the second—we shall be surprised at now finding that admirable which we before condemned that damnable which we had previously so much admired. It follows from all this that the ultimate, aggregate, or absolute effect of even the best epic under the sun, is a nullity:—and this is precisely the fact.

In regard to the Iliad, we have, if not positive proof, at least very good reason, for believing it intended as a series of lyrics; but, granting the epic intention, I can say only that the work is based in an imperfect sense of Art. The modern epic is, of the suppositious ancient model, but an inconsiderate and blindfold imitation. But the day of these artistic anomalies is over. If, at any time, any very long poem were popular in reality—which I doubt—it is at least clear that no very long poem will ever be popular again.

That the extent of a poetical work is, *ceteris* paribus, the measure of its merit, seems undoubtedly when we thus state it, a proposition sufficiently

absurd—yet we are indebted for it to the quarterly Reviews. Surely there can be nothing in mere size, abstractly considered—there can be nothing in mere bulk, so far as a volume is concerned, which has so continuously elicited admiration from these saturnine pamphlets! A mountain, to be sure, by the mere sentiment of physical magnitude which it conveys, does impress us with a sense of the sublime—but no man is impressed after this fashion by the material grandeur of even "The Columbiad." Even the Quarterlies have not instructed us to be so impressed by it. As yet, they have not insisted on our estimating Lamartine by the cubic foot, or Pollock by the pound—but what else are we to infer from their continual prating about "sustained effort?" If, by "sustained effort," any little gentleman has accomplished an epic, let us frankly commend him for the effort—if this indeed be a thing commendable—but let us forbear praising the epic on the effort's account. It is to be hoped that common sense, in the time to come, will prefer deciding upon a work of Art, rather by the impression it makes-by the effect it produces-than by the time it took to impress the effect, or by the amount of "sustained effort" which had been found necessary in effecting the impression. The fact is, that perseverance is one thing and genius quite another—nor can all the Quarterlies in Christendom confound them. By-and-by, this proposition, with many which I have been just urging, will be received as self-evident. In the meantime, by being generally condemned as falsities, they will not be essentially damaged as truths.

On the other hand, it is clear that a poem may be improperly brief. Undue brevity degenerates into mere epigrammatism. A *very* short poem, while

now and then producing a brilliant or vivid, never produces a profound or enduring effect. There must be the steady pressing down of the stamp upon the wax. De Béranger has wrought innumerable things, pungent and spirit-stirring; but, in general, they have been too imponderous to stamp themselves deeply into the public attention; and thus, as so many feathers of fancy, have been blown aloft only to be whistled down the wind.

A remarkable instance of the effect of undue brevity in depressing a poem—in keeping it out of the popular view—is afforded by the following exquisite little Serenade:

I arise from dreams of thee
In the first sweet sleep of night
When the winds are breathing low,
And the stars are shining bright.
I arise from dreams of thee,
And a spirit in my feet
Has led me—who knows how?—
To thy chamber-window, sweet!

The wandering airs they faint
On the dark, the silent stream—
The champak odors fail
Like sweet thoughts in a dream;
The nightingale's complaint,
It dies upon her heart,
As I must die on thine,
O, beloved as thou art!

O, lift me from the grass!

I die, I faint, I fail!

Let thy love in kisses rain

On my lips and eyelids pale.

My cheek is cold and white, alas!

My heart beats loud and fast:

Oh! press it close to thine again,

Where it will break at last!

Very few, perhaps, are familiar with these lines—yet no less a poet than Shelley is their author. Their warm, yet delicate and ethereal imagination will be appreciated by all—but by none so thoroughly as by him who has himself arisen from sweet dreams of one beloved, to bathe in the aromatic air of a southern midsummer night.

One of the finest poems by Willis—the very best, in my opinion, which he has ever written—has, no doubt, through this same defect of undue brevity, been kept back from its proper position, not less in the critical than in the popular view.

The shadows lay along Broadway, 'Twas near the twilight-tide—And slowly there a lady fair Was walking in her pride.

Alone walk'd she; but, viewlessly, Walk'd spirits at her side.

Peace charm'd the street beneath her feet,
And Honor charm'd the air;
And all astir looked kind on her,
And call'd her good as fair—
For all God ever gave to her
She kept with chary care.

She kept with care her beauties rare
From lovers warm and true—
For her heart was cold to all but gold,
And the rich came not to woo—
But honor'd well are charms to sell
If priests the selling do.

Now walking there was one more fair—A slight girl, lily-pale;
And she had unseen company
To make the spirit quail—
'Twixt Want and Scorn she walk'd forlorn,
And nothing could avail.

No mercy now can clear her brow
For this world's peace to pray;
For, as love's wild prayer dissolved in air,
Her woman's heart gave way!—
But the sin forgiven by Christ in Heaven
By man is cursed alway!

In this composition we find it difficult to recognize the Willis who has written so many mere "verses of society." The lines are not only richly ideal, but full of energy; while they breathe an earnestness—an evident sincerity of sentiment—for which we look in vain throughout all the other works of this author.

While the epic mania—while the idea that, to merit in poetry, prolixity is indispensable—has, for some years past, been gradually dying out of the public mind, by mere dint of its own absurdity we find it succeeded by a heresy too palpably false to be long tolerated, but one which, in the brief period it has already endured, may be said to have accomplished more in the corruption of our Poetical Literature than all its other enemies combined. I allude to the heresy of The Didactic. It has been assumed, tacitly and avowedly, directly and indirectly, that the ultimate object of all Poetry is Truth. Every poem, it is said, should inculcate a moral: and by this moral is the poetical merit of the work to be adjudged. We Americans especially have patronized this happy idea; and we Bostonians. very especially, have developed it in full. We have taken it into our heads that to write a poem simply for the poem's sake, and to acknowledge such to have been our design, would be to confess ourselves radically wanting in the true Poetic dignity and force -but the simple fact is, that, would we but permit ourselves to look into our own souls, we should

immediately there discover that under the sun there neither exists nor can exist any work more thoroughly dignified—more supremely noble than this very poem—this poem per se—this poem which is a poem and nothing more—this poem written solely for the poem's sake.

With as deep a reverence for the True as ever inspired the bosom of man, I would, nevertheless, limit, in some measure, its modes of inculcation. I would limit to enforce them. I would not enfeeble them by dissipation. The demands of Truth are severe. She has no sympathy with the myrtles. All that which is so indispensable in Song, is precisely all that with which she has nothing whatever to do. It is but making her a flaunting paradox, to wreathe her in gems and flowers. In enforcing a truth, we need severity rather than efflorescence of language. We must be simple, precise, terse. We must be cool, calm, unimpassioned. In a word, we must be in that mood which, as nearly as possible, is the exact converse of the poetical. He must be blind indeed who does not perceive the radical and chasmal differences between the truthful and the poetical modes of inculcation. He must be theory-mad beyond redemption who, in spite of these differences, shall still persist in attempting to reconcile the obstinate oils and waters of Poetry and Truth.

Dividing the world of mind into its three most immediately obvious distinctions, we have the Pure Intellect, Taste, and the Moral Sense. I place Taste in the middle, because it is just this position which, in the mind, it occupies. It holds intimate relations with either extreme; but from the Moral Sense is separated by so faint a difference that Aristotle has not hesitated to place some of its operations among the virtues themselves. Neverthe-

less, we find the offices of the trio marked with a sufficient distinction. Just as the Intellect concerns itself with Truth, so Taste informs us of the Beautiful while the Moral Sense is regardful of Duty. Of this latter, while Conscience teaches the obligation, and Reason the expediency, Taste contents herself with displaying the charms:—waging war upon Vice solely on the ground of her deformity—her disproportion—her animosity to the fitting, to the appropriate, to the harmonious—in a word, to

Beauty.

An immortal instinct, deep within the spirit of man, is thus, plainly, a sense of the beautiful. This it is which administers to his delight in the manifold forms, and sounds, and odors, and sentiments amid which he exists. And just as the lily is repeated in the lake, or the eyes of Amaryllis in the mirror, so is the mere oral or written repetition of these forms, and sounds, and colors, and odors, and sentiments, a duplicate source of delight. But this mere repetition is not poetry. He who shall simply sing, with however glowing enthusiasm, or with however vivid a truth of description, of the sights, and sounds, and odors, and colors, and sentiments, which greet him in common with all mankind—he, I say, has yet failed to prove his divine title. There is still a something in the distance which he has been unable to attain. We have still a thirst unquenchable, to allay which he has not shown us the crystal springs. This thirst belongs to the immortality of Man. It is at once a consequence and an indication of his perennial existence. It is the desire of the moth for the star. It is no mere appreciation of the Beauty before us-but a wild effort to reach the Beauty above. Inspired by an ecstatic prescience of the glories beyond the grave, we struggle, by multiform combinations among the things and thoughts of Time, to attain a portion of that Loveliness whose very elements, perhaps, appertain to eternity alone. And thus when by Poetry—or when by Music, the most entrancing of the Poetic moods—we find ourselves melted into tears—we weep then—not as the Abbaté Gravina supposes—through excess of pleasure, but through a certain, petulant, impatient sorrow at our inability to grasp now, wholly, here on earth, at once and forever, those divine and rapturous joys, of which through the poem, or through the music, we attain to but brief and indeterminate glimpses.

The struggle to apprehend the supernal Loveliness—this struggle, on the part of souls fittingly constituted—has given to the world all *that* which it (the world) has ever been enabled at once to understand

and to feel as poetic.

The Poetic Sentiment, of course, may develop itself in various modes—in Painting, in Sculpture, in Architecture, in the Dance-very especially in Music—and very peculiarly, and with a wide field, in the composition of the Landscape Garden. Our present theme, however, has regard only to its manifestation in words. And here let me speak briefly on the topic of rhythm. Contenting myself with the certainty that Music, in its various modes of metre, rhythm, and rhyme, is of so vast a moment in Poetry as never to be wisely rejected—is so vitally important an adjunct, that he is simply silly who declines its assistance, I will not now pause to maintain its absolute essentiality. It is in Music, perhaps, that the soul most nearly attains the great end for which, when inspired by the Poetic Sentiment, it struggles—the creation of supernal Beauty. It may be, indeed, that here this sublime end is,

now and then, attained in fact. We are often made to feel, with a shivering delight, that from an earthly harp are stricken notes which cannot have been unfamiliar to the angels. And thus there can be little doubt that in the union of Poetry with Music in its popular sense, we shall find the widest field for the Poetic development. The old Bards and Minnesingers had advantages which we do not possess—and Thomas Moore, singing his own songs, was, in the most legitimate manner, perfecting them as poems.

To recapitulate, then:—I would define, in brief, the Poetry of words as *The Rhythmical Creation of Beauty*. Its sole arbiter is Taste. With the Intellect or with the Conscience, it has only collateral relations. Unless incidentally, it has no concern

whatever either with Duty or with Truth.

A few words, however, in explanation, That pleasure which is at once the most pure, the most elevating, and the most intense, is derived. I maintain, from the contemplation of the Beautiful. In the contemplation of Beauty we alone find it possible to attain that pleasurable elevation, or excitement, of the soul, which we recognize as the Poetic Sentiment, and which is so easily distinguished from Truth, which is the satisfaction of the Reason, or from Passion, which is the excitement of the heart. I make Beauty, therefore—using the word as inclusive of the sublime—I make Beauty the province of the poem, simply because it is an obvious rule of Art that effects should be made to spring as directly as possible from their causes:—no one as yet having been weak enough to deny that the peculiar elevation in question is at least most readily attainable in the poem. It by no means follows, however, that the incitements of Passion, or the precepts of Duty, or

even the lessons of Truth, may not be introduced into a poem, and with advantage; for they may subserve, incidentally, in various ways, the general purposes of the work:—but the true artist will always contrive to tone them down in proper subjection to that Beauty which is the atmosphere and the real essence of the poem.

I cannot better introduce the few poems which I shall present for your consideration, than by the citation of the Pröem to Mr. Longfellow's "Waif":

THE day is done, and the darkness Falls from the wings of Night, As a feather is wafted downward From an Eagle in his flight.

I see the lights of the village Gleam through the rain and the mist, And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me, That my soul cannot resist;

A feeling of sadness and longing, That is not akin to pain, And resembles sorrow only As the mist resembles the rain.

Come, read to me some poem, Some simple and heartfelt lay, That shall soothe this restless feeling, And banish the thoughts of day.

Not from the grand old masters, Not from the bards sublime, Whose distant footsteps echo Through the corridors of time.

For, like strains of martial music, Their mighty thoughts suggest Life's endless toil and endeavor; And to-night I long for rest. Read from some humbler poet,
Whose songs gushed from his heart,
As showers from the clouds of summer,
Or tears from the eyelids start;

Who through long days of labor, And nights devoid of ease, Still heard in his soul the music Of wonderful melodies.

Such songs have power to quiet
The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction
That follows after prayer.

Then read from the treasured volume
The poem of thy choice,
And lend to the rhyme of the poet
The beauty of thy voice.

And the night shall be filled with music, And the cares, that infest the day, Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs. And as silently steal away.

With no great range of imagination, these lines have been justly admired for their delicacy of expression. Some of the images are very effective. Nothing can be better than—

The bards sublime,
Whose distant footsteps echo
Down the corridors of Time,

The idea of the last quartrain is also very effective. The poem, on the whole, however, is chiefly to be admired for the graceful *insouciance* of its metre, so well in accordance with the character of the sentiments, and especially for the *ease* of the general manner. This "ease," or naturalness, in a literary style, it has long been the fashion to regard as ease in

appearance alone—as a point of really difficult attainment. But not so:—a natural manner is difficult only to him who should never meddle with it—to the unnatural. It is but the result of writing with the understanding, or with the instinct, that the tone, in composition, should always be that which the mass of mankind would adopt—and must perpetually vary, of course, with the occasion. The author who, after the fashion of "The North American Review," should be, upon all occasions, merely "quiet," must necessarily upon many occasions, be simply silly, or stupid; and has no more right to be considered "easy," or "natural," than a Cockney exquisite, or than the sleeping Beauty in the waxworks.

Among the minor poems of Bryant, none has so much impressed me as the one which he entitles "June." I quote only a portion of it:

There, through the long, long summer hours,
The golden light should lie,
And thick, young herbs and groups of flowers
Stand in their beauty by.
The oriole should build and tell
His love-tale, close beside my cell;
The idle butterfly
Should rest him there, and there be heard
The housewife-bee and humming bird.

And what, if cheerful shouts, at noon,
Come, from the village sent,
Or songs of maids, beneath the moon,
With fairy laughter blent?
And what if, in the evening light,
Betrothed lovers walk in sight
Of my low monument?
I would the lovely scene around
Might know no sadder sight nor sound.

I know, I know I should not see
The season's glorious show,
Nor would its brightness shine for me
Nor its wild music flow;
But if, around my place of sleep,
The friends I love should come to weep,
They might not haste to go.
Soft airs, and song, and light, and bloom
Should keep them lingering by my tomb.

These to their soften'd hearts should bear
The thought of what has been,
And speak of one who cannot share
The gladness of the scene;
Whose part in all the pomp that fills
The circuit of the summer hills,
Is—that his grave is green;
And deeply would their hearts rejoice
To hear again his living voice,

The rhythmical flow, here, is even voluptuous—nothing could be more melodious. The poem has always affected me in a remarkable manner. The intense melancholy which seems to well up, perforce, to the surface of all the poet's cheerful sayings about his grave, we find thrilling us to the soul—while there is the truest poetic elevation in the thrill. The impression left is one of a pleasurable sadness. And if, in the remaining compositions which I shall introduce to you, there be more or less of a similar tone always apparent, let me remind you that (how or why we know not) this certain taint of sadness is inseparably connected with all the higher manifestations of true Beauty. It is, nevertheless,

A feeling of sadness and longing
That is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles the rain.

The taint of which I speak is clearly perceptible even in a poem so full of brilliancy and spirit as the "Health" of Edward Coote Pinkney:

I fill this cup to one made up
Of loveliness alone,
A woman, of her gentle sex
The seeming paragon;
To whom the better elements
And kindly stars have given
A form so fair, that, like the air,
'Tis less of earth than heaven.

Her every tone is music's own,
Like those of morning birds,
And something more than melody
Dwells ever in her words;
The coinage of her heart are they,
And from her lips each flows
As one may see the burden'd bee
Forth issue from the rose.

Affections are as thoughts to her,
The measures of her hours;
Her feelings have the fragrancy,
The freshness of young flowers;
And lovely passions, changing oft,
So fill her, she appears
The image of themselves by turns,—
The idol of past years!

Of her bright face one glance will trace
A picture on the brain,
And of her voice in echoing hearts
A sound must long remain;
But memory, such as mine of her,
So very much endears,
When death is nigh my latest sigh
Will not be life's, but hers.

I fill'd this cup to one made up
Of loveliness alone,
A woman, of her gentle sex
The seeming paragon—
Her health! and would on earth there stood,
Some more of such a frame,
That life might be all poetry,
And weariness a name.

It was the misfortune of Mr. Pinkney to have been born too far south. Had be been a New Englander, it is probable that he would have been ranked as the first of American lyrists, by that magnanimous cabal which has so long controlled the destinies of American Letters, in conducting the thing called "The North American Review." The poem just cited is especially beautiful; but the poetic elevation which it induces, we must refer chiefly to our sympathy in the poet's enthusiasm. We pardon his hyperboles for the evident earnestness with which they are uttered.

It was by no means my design, however, to expatiate upon the *merits* of what I should read you. These will necessarily speak for themselves. Boccalini, in his "Advertisements from Parnassus," tells us that Zoilus once presented Apollo a very caustic criticism upon a very admirable book:—whereupon the god asked him for the beauties of the work. He replied that he only busied himself about the errors. On hearing this, Apollo, handing him a sack of unwinnowed wheat, bade him pick out all the chaff for his reward.

Now this fable answers very well as a hit at the critics—but I am by no means sure that the god was in the right. I am by no means certain that the true limits of the critical duty are not grossly misunderstood. Excellence, in a poem especially,

may be considered in the light of an axiom, which need only be properly put, to become self-evident. It is not excellence if it require to be demonstrated as such:—and thus, to point out too particularly the merits of a work of Art, is to admit that they are not merits altogether.

Among the "Melodies" of Thomas Moore, is one whose distinguished character as a poem proper, seems to have been singularly left out of view. I allude to his lines beginning—"Come rest in this bosom." The intense energy of their expression is not surpassed by anything in Byron. There are two of the lines in which a sentiment is conveyed that embodies the all in all of the divine passion of Love—a sentiment which, perhaps, has found its echo in more, and in more passionate, human hearts than any other single sentiment ever embodied in words:

Come, rest in this bosom, my own stricken deer, Though the herd have fled from thee, thy home is still here; Here still is the smile, that no cloud can o'ercast, And a heart and a hand all thy own to the last.

Oh! what was love made for, if't is not the same Through joy and through torment, through glory and shame? I know not, I ask not, if guilt's in that heart, I but know that I love thee, whatever thou art.

Thou hast call'd me thy Angel in moments of bliss, And thy Angel I'll be, 'mid the horrors of this,— Through the furnace, unshrinking, thy steps to pursue, And shield thee, and save thee,—or perish there too!

It has been the fashion, of late days, to deny Moore Imagination, while granting him Fancy—a distinction originating with Coleridge—than whom no man more fully comprehended the great powers of Moore. The fact is, that the fancy of this poet so

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far predominates over all his other faculties, and over the fancy of all other men, as to have induced, very naturally, the idea that he is fanciful only. But never was there a greater mistake. Never was a grosser wrong done the fame of a true poet. In the compass of the English language I can call to mind no poem more profoundly—more weirdly imaginative, in the best sense, than the lines commencing—"I would I were by that dim lake"—which are the composition of Thomas Moore. I regret that I am unable to remember them.

One of the noblest—and, speaking of Fancy, one of the most singularly fanciful of modern poets, was Thomas Hood. His "Fair Ines" had always,

for me, an inexpressible charm:

O saw ye not fair Ines?
She's gone into the West,
To dazzle when the sun is down,
And rob the world of rest:
She took out daylight with her,
The smiles that we love best,
With morning blushes on her cheek,
And pearls upon her breast.

O turn again, fair Ines,
Before the fall of night,
For fear the moon should shine alone,
And stars unrivall'd bright;
And blessed will the lover be
That walks beneath their light,
And breathes the love against thy cheek
I dare not even write!

Would I had been, fair Ines, That gallant cavalier, Who rode so gaily by thy side, And whisper'd thee so near! Were there no bonny dames at home, Or no true lovers here, That he should cross the seas to win The dearest of the dear?

I saw thee, lovely Ines,
Descend along the shore,
With bands of noble gentlemen,
And banners wav'd before;
And gentle youth and maidens gay,
And snowy plumes they wore;
It would have been a beauteous dream,
—If it had been no more!

Alas, alas, fair Ines,
She went away with song,
With Music waiting on her steps,
And shoutings of the throng;
But some were sad and felt no mirth,
But only Music's wrong,
In sounds that sang Farewell, Farewell,
To her you've loved so long.

Farewell, farewell, fair Ines,
That vessel never bore
So fair a lady on its deck,
Nor danced so light before,
Alas for pleasure on the sea,
And sorrow on the shore!
The smile that blest one lover's heart
Has broken many more!

"The Haunted House," by the same author, is one of the truest poems ever written—one of the truest—one of the most unexceptionable—one of the most thoroughly artistic, both in its theme and in its execution. It is, moreover, powerfully ideal—imaginative. I regret that its length renders, it unsuitable for the purposes of this Lecture. In place of it, permit me to offer the universally appreciated "Bridge of Sighs."

One more Unfortunate, Weary of breath, Rashly importunate, Gone to her death!

Take her up tenderly, Lift her with care;—Fashion'd so slenderly, Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments Clinging like cerements; Whilst the wave constantly Drips from her clothing; Take her up instantly, Loving, not loathing.—

Touch her not scornfully; Think of her mournfully, Gently and humanly; Not of the stains of her, All that remains of her Now, is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny Into her mutiny Rash and undutiful; Pass all dishonor, Death has left on her Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers, One of Eve's family— Wipe those poor lips of hers Oozing so clammily.

Loop up her tresses Escaped from the comb, Her fair auburn tresses; Whilst wonderment guesses Where was her home? Who was her father?
Who was her mother?
Had she a sister?
Had she a brother?
Or was there a dearer one
Still, and a nearer one
Yet, than all other?

Alas! for the rarity Of Christian charity Under the sun! Oh! it was pitiful! Near a whole city full, Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly,
Feelings had changed:
Love, by harsh evidence,
Thrown from its eminence;
Even God's providence
Seeming estranged.
Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,
With many a light
From window and casement,
From garret to basement,
She stood, with amazement,
Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March Made her tremble and shiver; But not the dark arch, Or the black flowing river: Mad from life's history, Glad to death's mystery, Swift to be hurl'd—Anywhere, anywhere Out of the world!

In she plunged boldly, No matter how coldly The rough river ran,—Over the brink of it, Picture it,—think of it, Dissolute Man! Lave in it, drink of it Then, if you can!

Take her up tenderly, Lift her with care; Fashion'd so slenderly, Young, and so fair!

Ere her limbs frigidly Stiffen too rigidly, Decently,—kindly,— Smooth, and compose them; And her eyes, close them, Staring so blindly!

Dreadfully staring
Through muddy impurity,
As when with the daring
Last look of despairing
Fixed on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
Spurred by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity,
Into her rest,—
Cross her hands humbly,
As if praying dumbly,
Over her breast!
Owning her weakness,
Her evil behavior,
And leaving, with meekness,
Her sins to her Savior!

The vigor of this poem is no less remarkable than its pathos. The versification, although carrying the fanciful to the very verge of the fantastic, is

nevertheless admirably adapted to the wild insanity which is the thesis of the poem.

Among the minor poems of Lord Byron, is one which has never received from the critics the praise which it undoubtedly deserves:

Though the day of my destiny's over,
And the star of my fate hath declined,
Thy soft heart refused to discover
The faults which so many could find;
Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted,
It shrunk not to share it with me,
And the love which my spirit hath painted
It never hath found but in thee.

Then when nature around me is smiling,
The last smile which answers to mine,
I do not believe it beguiling,
Because it reminds me of thine;
And when winds are at war with the ocean,
As the breasts I believed in with me,
If their billows excite an emotion,
It is that they bear me from thee.

Though the rock of my last hope is shivered,
And its fragments are sunk in the wave,
Though I feel that my soul is delivered
To pain—it shall not be its slave.
There is many a pang to pursue me:
They may crush, but they shall not contemn—
They may torture, but shall not subdue me—
'Tis of thee that I think—not of them.

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,
Though woman, thou didst not forsake,
Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,
Though slandered, thou never couldst shake,—
Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,
Though parted, it was not to fly,
Though watchful, 't was not to defame me,
Nor mute, that the world might belie,

Yet I blame not the world, nor despise it,

Nor the war of the many with one—
If my soul was not fitted to prize it,

'T was folly not sooner to shun:
And if dearly that error hath cost me,
And more than I once could forsee,
I have found that whatever it lost me,
It could not deprive me of thee.

From the wreck of the past, which hath perished,
Thus much I at least may recall,
It hath taught me that which I most cherished
Deserved to be dearest of all:
In the desert a fountain is springing,
In the wide waste there still is a tree,
And a bird in the solitude singing,
Which speaks to my spirit of thee.

Although the rhythm, here, is one of the most difficult, the versification could scarcely be improved. No nobler *theme* ever engaged the pen of poet. It is the soul-elevating idea, that no man can consider himself entitled to complain of Fate while, in his adversity, he still retains the unwavering love of woman.

From Alfred Tennyson—although in perfect sincerity I regard him as the noblest poet that ever lived—I have left myself time to cite only a very brief specimen. I call him, and think him the noblest of poets—not because the impressions he produces are, at all times, the most profound—not because the poetical excitement which he induces is, at all times, the most intense—but because it is, at all times, the most ethereal—in other words, the most elevating and the most pure. No poet is so little of the earth, earthy. What I am about to read is from his last long poem, "The Princess:"

Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean, Tears from the depth of some divine despair Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes, In looking on the happy Autumn-fields, And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail, That brings our friends up from the underworld, Sad as the last which reddens over one That sinks with all we love below the verge; So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds To dying ears, when unto dying eyes The casement slowly grows a glimmering square; So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

Dear as remember'd kisses after death, And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd On lips that are for others; deep as love, Deep as first love, and wild with all regret; O Death in Life, the days that are no more.

Thus, although in a very cursory and imperfect manner, I have endeavored to convey to you my conception of the Poetic Principle. It has been my purpose to suggest that, while this Principle itself is, strictly and simply, the Human Aspiration for Supernal Beauty, the manifestation of the Principle is always found in an elevating excitement of the Soul—quite independent of that passion which is the intoxication of the Heart-or of that Truth which is the satisfaction of the Reason. For, in regard to Passion, alas! its tendency is to degrade, rather than to elevate the Soul. Love, on the contrary-Love-the true, the divine Eros-the Uranian, as distinguished from the Dionæan Venusis unquestionably the purest and truest of all poetical themes. And in regard to Truth-if, to be

sure, through the attainment of a truth, we are led to perceive a harmony where none was apparent before, we experience, at once, the true poetical effect—but this effect is referable to the harmony alone, and not in the least degree to the truth which merely served to render the harmony manifest.

We shall reach, however, more immediately a distinct conception of what the true Poetry is, by mere reference to a few of the simple elements which induce in the Poet himself the true poetical effect. He recognizes the ambrosia which nourishes his soul, in the bright orbs that shine in Heavenin the volutes of the flower—in the clustering of low shrubberies—in the waving of the grain-fields in the slanting of tall, Eastern trees—in the blue distance of mountains—in the grouping of clouds in the twinkling of half-hidden brooks—in the gleaming of silver rivers—in the repose of sequestered lakes—in the star-mirroring depths of lonely wells. He perceives it in the songs of birds—in the harp of Æolus-in the sighing of the night-wind-in the repining voice of the forest-in the surf that complains to the shore—in the fresh breath of the woods -in the scent of the violet-in the voluptuous perfume of the hyacinth—in the suggestive odor that comes to him, at eventide, from far-distant, undiscovered islands, over dim oceans, illimitable and unexplored. He owns it in all noble thoughtsin all unworldly motives—in all holy impulses—in all chivalrous, generous, and self-sacrificing deeds. He feels it in the beauty of woman-in the grace of her step-in the lustre of her eye-in the melody of her voice—in her soft laughter—in her sigh—in the harmony of the rustling of her robes. He deeply feels it in her winning endearments—in her burning enthusiasms—in her gentle charities—in her meek and devotional endurances—but above all—ah, far above all—he kneels to it—he worships it in the faith, in the purity, in the strength, in the altogether divine majesty—of her *love*.

Let me conclude—by the recitation of yet another brief poem—one very different in character from any that I have before quoted. It is by Motherwell, and is called "The Song of the Cavalier." With our modern and altogether rational ideas of the absurdity and impiety of warfare, we are not precisely in that frame of mind best adapted to sympathize with the sentiments, and thus to appreciate the real excellence of the poem. To do this fully, we must identify ourselves, in fancy, with the soul of the old cavalier.

Then mounte! then mounte, brave gallants, all, And don your helmes amaine:

Deathe's couriers, Fame and Honor, call

Us to the field againe.

No shrewish teares shall fill our eye
When the sword-hilt's in our hand,—
Heart-whole we'll part, and no whit sighe
For the fayrest of the land;
Let piping swaine, and craven wight,
Thus weepe and puling crye,
Our business is like men to fight,
And hero-like to die!

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

THE RAVEN

NCE upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,

Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—

While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,

As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.

"'Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door—

Only this and nothing more."

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December,

And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.

Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow

From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore—

For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore—

Nameless here for evermore.

And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain

Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;

So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating

"Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door—

Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door;

This it is and nothing more."

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,

"Sir," said I, "or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;

But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,

And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door.

That I scarce was sure I heard you"—here I opened wide the door;——

Darkness there and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,

Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortals ever dared to dream before;

But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,

And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, "Lenore?"

This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, "Lenore!"

Merely this and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,

Soon again I heard a tapping something louder than before.

"Surely," said I, "surely that is something at my window lattice;

Let me see, then, what thereat is and this mystery explore—

Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore;—

'Tis the wind and nothing more."

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,

In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore.

Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he;

But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door—

Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door—

Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling,

By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore,

"Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou," I said, "art sure no craven,

Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly shore—

Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore!"

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly,

Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy bore;

For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being

Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door—

Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door,

With such name as "Nevermore."

But the Raven, sitting lonely on that placid bust, spoke only

That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour.

Nothing farther then he uttered; not a feather then he fluttered—

Till I scarcely more than muttered "Other friends have flown before—

On the morrow he will leave me, as my Hopes have flown before."

Then the bird said "Nevermore."

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,

"Doubtless," said I, "what it utters is its only stock and store

Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful Disaster

Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore—

Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore

Of 'Never-nevermore.'"

But the Raven still beguiling all my sad soul into smiling,

Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird and bust and door;

Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking

Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore—

What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore

Meant in croaking "Nevermore."

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing

To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom's core;

This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining

On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamp-light gloated o'er,

But whose velvet violet lining with the lamp-light gloating o'er

She shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer

Swung by Seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted floor.

"Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee—by these angels he hath sent thee

Respite—respite and nepenthe from thy memories of Lenore!

Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe and forget this lost Lenore!"

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!—

Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore,

Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted—

On this home by Horror haunted—tell me truly, I implore—

Is there—is there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me, I implore!"

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil—prophet still, if bird or devil!

By that Heaven that bends above us—by that God we both adore—

Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,

It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore—

Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore."

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!"
I shrieked, upstarting—

"Get thee back into the tempest and the Night's - Plutonian shore!

Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!

Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quit the bust above my door!

Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!"

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting

On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door:

And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,

And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;

And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor

Shall be lifted—nevermore!

LENORE

H, broken is the golden bowl! the spirit flown forever!

Let the bell toll!—a saintly soul floats on

the Stygian river;

And, Guy De Vere, hast thou no tear?—weep now or never more!

See! on you drear and rigid bier low lies thy love, Lenore!

Come! let the burial rite be read—the funeral song be sung!—

An anthem for the queenliest dead that ever died so young—

A dirge for her the doubly dead in that she died so young.

"Wretches! ye loved her for her wealth and hated her for her pride,

"And when she fell in feeble health, ye blessed her that she died!

- "How shall the ritual, then, be read?—the requiem how be sung
- "By you—by yours, the evil eye,—by yours, the slanderous tongue
- "That did to death the innocence that died, and died so young?"
- Peccavimus; but rave not thus! and let a Sabbath song
- Go up to God so solemnly the dead may feel no wrong!
- The sweet Lenore hath "gone before," with Hope, that flew beside,
- Leaving thee wild for the dear child that should have been thy bride—
- For her, the fair and debonair, that now so lowly lies,
- The life upon her yellow hair but not within her eyes—
- The life still there, upon her hair—the death upon her eyes.
- "Avaunt! to-night my heart is light. No dirge will I upraise,
- "But waft the angel on her flight with a Pæan of old days!
- "Let no bell toll!—lest her sweet soul, amid its hallowed mirth,
- "Should catch the note, as it doth float up from the damnéd Earth.
- "To friends above, from fiends below, the indignant ghost is riven—
- "From Hell unto a high estate far up within the Heaven—
- "From grief and groan, to a golden throne, beside the King of Heaven."

HYMN

T morn—at noon—at twilight dimMaria! thou hast heard my hymn!
In joy and wo—in good and ill—
Mother of God, be with me still!
When the Hours flew brightly by,
And not a cloud obscured the sky,
My soul, lest it should truant be,
Thy grace did guide to thine and thee;
Now, when storms of Fate o'ercast
Darkly my Present and my Past,
Let my Future radiant shine
With sweet hopes of thee and thine!

A VALENTINE

OR her this rhyme is penned, whose luminous eyes,
Brightly expressive as the twins of Lœda,
Shall find her own sweet name, that, nestling lies
Upon the page, enwrapped from every reader.
Search narrowly the lines!—they hold a treasure
Divine—a talisman—an amulet
That must be worn at heart. Search well the measure—

The words—the syllables! Do not forget
The trivialest point, or you may lose your labor!
And yet there is in this no Gordian knot
Which one might not undo without a sabre,
If one could merely comprehend the plot.

Enwritten upon the leaf where now are peering
Eyes scintillating soul, there lie perdus
Three eloquent words oft uttered in the hearing
Of poets, by poets—as the name is a poet's, too.
Its letters, although naturally lying

Like the knight Pinto—Mendez Ferdinando—Still form a synonym for Truth.—Cease trying!

You will not read the riddle, though you do the best you can do.

[To translate the address, read the first letter of the first line in connection with the second letter of the second line, the third letter of the third line, the fourth of the fourth, and so on to the end. The name will thus appear.]

THE COLISEUM

Of lofty contemplation left to Time
By buried centuries of pomp and power!
At length—at length—after so many days
Of weary pilgrimage and burning thirst,
(Thirst for the springs of lore that in thee lie,)
I kneel, an altered and an humble man,
Amid thy shadows, and so drink within
My very soul thy grandeur, gloom and glory!

Vastness! and Age! and Memories of Eld!
Silence! and Desolation! and dim Night!
I feel ye now—I feel ye in your strength—
O spells more sure than e'er Judæan king
Taught in the gardens of Gethsemane!
O charms more potent than the rapt Chaldee
Ever drew down from out the quiet stars!

Here, where a hero fell, a column falls!
Here, where the mimic eagle glared in gold,
A midnight vigil holds the swarthy bat!
Here, where the dames of Rome their gilded hair
Waved to the wind, now wave the reed and thistle!
Here, where on golden throne the monarch lolled,
Glides, spectre-like, unto his marble home,
Lit by the wan light of the hornéd moon,
The swift and silent lizard of the stones!

But stay! these walls—these ivy-clad arcades—
These mouldering plinths—these sad and blackened shafts—

These vague entablatures—this crumbling frieze— These shattered cornices—this wreck—this ruin— These stones—alas! these gray stones—are they all—All of the famed, and the colossal left By the corrosive Hours to Fate and me?

- "Not all"—the Echoes answer me—"not all!
- "Prophetic sounds and loud, arise forever
- "From us, and from all Ruin, unto the wise,
- "As melody from Memnon to the Sun.
- "We rule the hearts of mightiest men—we rule
- "With a despotic sway all giant minds.
- "We are not impotent—we pallid stones.
- "Not all our power is gone—not all our fame—
- "Not all the magic of our high renown-
- "Not all the wonder that encircles us-
- "Not all the mysteries that in us lie-
- "Not all the memories that hang upon
- "And cling around about us as a garment,
- "Clothing us in a robe of more than glory."

TO HELEN

SAW thee once—once only—years ago: I must not say how many—but not many. It was a July midnight; and from out A full-orbed moon, that, like thine own soul, soaring, Sought a precipitate pathway up through heaven, There fell a silvery-silken veil of light, With quietude, and sultriness, and slumber, Upon the upturn'd faces of a thousand Roses that grew in an enchanted garden, Where no wind dared to stir, unless on tiptoe-Fell on the upturn'd faces of these roses That gave out, in return for the love-light, Their odorous souls in an ecstatic death— Fell on the upturn'd faces of these roses That smiled and died in this parterre, enchanted By thee, and by the poetry of thy presence.

Clad all in white, upon a violet bank
I saw thee half reclining; while the moon
Fell on the upturn'd faces of the roses,
And on thine own, upturn'd—alas, in sorrow!

Was it not Fate, that, on this July midnight—Was it not Fate, (whose name is also Sorrow,)
That bade me pause before that garden-gate,
To breathe the incense of those slumbering roses?
No footstep stirred: the hated world all slept,
Save only thee and me. (Oh, Heaven!—oh, God!
How my heart beats in coupling those two words!)
Save only thee and me. I paused—I looked—And in an instant all things disappeared.
(Ah, bear in mind this garden was enchanted!)
The pearly lustre of the moon went out:

The mossy banks and the meandering paths, The happy flowers and the repining trees, Were seen no more: the very roses' odors Died in the arms of the adoring airs. All—all expired save thee—save less than thou: Save only the divine light in thine eyes-Save but the soul in thine uplifted eyes. I saw but them—they were the world to me. I saw but them—saw only them for hours— Saw only them until the moon went down. What wild heart-histories seemed to lie enwritten Upon those crystalline, celestial spheres! How dark a wo! yet how sublime a hope! How silently serene a sea of pride! How daring an ambition! yet how deep— How fathomless a capacity for love!

But now, at length, dear Dian sank from sight, Into a western couch of thunder-cloud; And thou, a ghost, amid the entombing trees Didst glide way. Only thine eyes remained. They would not go—they never yet have gone. Lighting my lonely pathway home that night, They have not left me (as my hopes have) since. They follow me—they lead me through the years. They are my ministers—yet I their slave. Their office is to illumine and enkindle— My duty, to be saved by their bright light. And purified in their electric fire, And sanctified in their elysian fire. They fill my soul with Beauty (which is Hope,) And are far up in Heaven—the stars I kneel to In the sad, silent watches of my night; While even in the meridian glare of day I see them still—two sweetly scintillant Venuses, unextinguished by the sun!

TO —

OT long ago, the writer of these lines, In the mad pride of intellectuality, Maintained "the power of words"—denied that ever

A thought arose within the human brain
Beyond the utterance of the human tongue:
And now, as if in mockery of that boast,
Two words—two foreign soft dissyllables—
Italian tones, made only to be murmured
By angels dreaming in the moonlit "dew
That hangs like chains of pearl on Hermon hill,"—
Have stirred from out the abysses of his heart,
Unthought-like thoughts that are the souls of
thought,

Richer, far wilder, far diviner visions
Than even the seraph harper, Israfel,
(Who has "the sweetest voice of all God's creatures,")
Could hope to utter. And I! my spells are broken.
The pen falls powerless from my shivering hand.
With thy dear name as text, though bidden by thee,
I cannot write—I cannot speak or think—
Alas, I cannot feel; for 'tis not feeling,
This standing motionless upon the golden
Threshold of the wide-open gate of dreams,
Gazing, entranced, adown the gorgeous vista,
And thrilling as I see, upon the right,
Upon the left, and all the way along,
Amid unpurpled vapors, far away
To where the prospect terminates—thee only.

ULALUME

The leaves they were ashen and sober;
The leaves they were crisped and sere—
The leaves they were withering and sere;
It was night in the lonesome October
Of my most immemorial year;
It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,
In the misty mid region of Weir—
It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,
In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Here once, through an alley Titantic,
Of cypress, I roamed with my Soul—
Of cypress, with Psyche, my Soul.
These were days when my heart was volcanic
As the scoriac rivers that roll—
As the lavas that restlessly roll
Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek
In the ultimate climes of the pole—
That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek
In the realms of the boreal pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober,
But our thoughts they were palsied and sere—
Our memories were treacherous and sere—
For we knew not the month was October,
And we marked not the night of the year—
(Ah, night of all nights in the year!)
We noted not the dim lake of Auber—
(Though once we had journeyed down here)—
Remembered not the dank tarn of Auber,
Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

And now, as the night was senescent
And star-dials pointed to morn—
As the star-dials hinted of morn—
At the end of our path a liquescent
And nebulous lustre was born,
Out of which a miraculous crescent
Arose with a duplicate horn—
Astarte's bediamonded crescent
Distinct with its duplicate horn.

And I said—"She is warmer than Dian:
She rolls through an ether of sighs—
She revels in a region of sighs:
She has seen that the tears are not dry on
These cheeks, where the worm never dies,
And has come past the stars of the Lion
To point us the path to the skies—
To the Lethean peace of the skies—
Come up, in despite of the Lion,
To shine on us with her bright eyes—

Come up through the lair of the Lion, With love in her luminous eyes."

But Psyche, uplifting her finger,
Said—"Sadly this star I mistrust—
Her pallor I strangely mistrust:—
Oh, hasten!—oh, let us not linger!
Oh, fly!—let us fly!—for we must."
In terror she spoke, letting sink her
Wings until they trailed in the dust—
In agony sobbed, letting sink her
Plumes till they trailed in the dust—

Plumes till they trailed in the dust— Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust. I replied—"This is nothing but dreaming: Let us on by this tremulous light! Let us bathe in this crystalline light!

Its Sybilic splendor is beaming

With Hope and in Beauty to-night:—
See!—it flickers up the sky through the night!

Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming, And be sure it will lead us aright—

We safely may trust to a gleaming That cannot but guide us aright,

Since it flickers up to Heaven through the night."

Thus I pacified Psyche and kissed her,
And tempted her out of her gloom—
And conquered her scruples and gloom;

And we passed to the end of the vista,

But were stopped by the door of a tomb—

By the door of a legended tomb;

And I said—"What is written, sweet sister, On the door of this legended tomb?" She replied—"Ulalume—Ulalume— "Tis the yault of thy lost Ulalume!"

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober

As the leaves that were withering and sere—

As the leaves that were withering and sere

As the leaves that were chisped and sere,
And I cried—"It was surely October
On this very night of last year

That I journeyed—I journeyed down here—That I brought a dread burden down here—On this night of all nights in the year, Ah, what demon has tempted me here?

Well I know, now, this dim lake of Auber— This misty mid region of Weir—

Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber, This ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir."

THE BELLS

T.

Silver bells!

What a world of merriment their melody foretells!

How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,

In the icy air of night!

While the stars that oversprinkle

All the heavens, seem to twinkle

With a crystalline delight;

Keeping time, time, time,

In a sort of Runic rhyme,

To the tintinabulation that so musically wells

From the bells, bells, bells,

Bells, bells, bells,

From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.

II.

Hear the mellow wedding bells,
Golden bells!

What a world of happiness their harmony foretells!
Through the balmy air of night
How they ring out their delight!
From the molten-golden notes,
And all in tune,
What a liquid ditty floats
To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats
On the moon!

Oh, from out the sounding cells, What a gush of euphony voluminously wells!

How it swells!
How it dwells

On the Future! how it tells
Of the rapture that impels
To the swinging and the ringing
Of the bells, bells, bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells,

Bells, bells, bells—

To the rhyming and the chiming of the bells!

III.

Hear the loud alarum bells— Brazen bells!

What a tale of terror, now, their turbulency tells!

In the startled ear of night

How they scream out their affright!

Too much horrified to speak,

They can only shriek, shriek,

Out of tune.

In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire, In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire

Leaping higher, higher, higher, With a desperate desire,
And a resolute endeavor
Now—now to sit or never,
By the side of the pale-faced moon.

Oh, the bells, bells, bells!
What a tale their terror tells

Of Despair!

How they clang, and clash, and roar!
What a horror they outpour
On the bosom of the palpitating air!

Yet the ear it fully knows,
By the twanging,
And the clanging,
How the danger ebbs and flows;

Yet the ear distinctly tells,

In the jangling, And the wrangling,

How the danger sinks and swells,
By the sinking or the swelling in the anger of the
bells,

Of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
In the clamor and the clangor of the bells!

IV.

Hear the tolling of the bells— Iron bells!

What a world of solemn thought their monody compels!

In the silence of the night, How we shiver with affright

At the melancholy menace of their tone!

For every sound that floats

From the rust within their throats Is a groan.

And the people—ah, the people— They that dwell up in the steeple, All alone,

And who tolling, tolling, tolling, In that muffled monotone,

Feel a glory in so rolling

On the human heart a stone—
They are neither man nor woman—
They are neither brute nor human—
They are Ghouls:

And their king it is who tolls; And he rolls, rolls, rolls, Rolls

A pæan from the bells!
And his merry bosom swells
With the pæan of the bells!
And he dances, and he yells;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,

To the pæan of the bells—Of the bells:

Keeping time, time, time, In a sort of Runic rhyme,

To the throbbing of the bells—Of the bells, bells, bells—

To the sobbing of the bells; Keeping time, time, time,

As he knells, knells, knells,

In a happy Runic rhyme,
To the rolling of the bells—

Of the bells, bells, bells—
To the tolling of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells—

Bells, bells—
To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.

AN ENIGMA

ELDOM we find," says Solomon Don Dunce,
Half an idea in the profoundest sonnet.
Through all the flimsy things we see at once
As easily as through a Naples bonnet—
Trash of all trash!—how can a lady don it?
Yet heavier far than your Petrarchan stuff—
Owl-downy nonsense that the faintest puff
Twirls into trunk-paper the while you con it."

And, veritably, Sol is right enough.

The general tuckermanities are arrant
Bubbles—ephemeral and so transparent—

But *this* is, now,—you may depend upon it—Stable, opaque, immortal—all by dint
Of the dear names that lie concealed within't.

ANNABEL LEE

In a kingdom by the sea,

That a maiden there lived whom you may know

By the name of Annabel Lee;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child and she was a child, In this kingdom by the sea:

But we loved with a love that was more than love— I and my Annabel Lee;

With a love that the winged seraphs of heaven Coveted her and me.

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And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
My beautiful Annabel Lee;
So that her highborn kinsman came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulchre
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,
Went envying her and me—
Yes!—that was the reason (as all men know,
In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud by night

That the wind came out of the cloud by night, Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we—
Of many far wiser than we—
And neither the angels in heaven above,
Nor the demons down under the sea,
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee:

For the moon never beams, without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride,
In the sepulchre there by the sea,

1 : 44

In the sepulchre there by the sea, In her tomb by the sounding sea.

TO MY MOTHER

ECAUSE I feel that, in the Heavens above,

The angels, whispering to one another,
Can find, among their burning terms of love,
None so devotional as that of "Mother,"
Therefore by that dear name I long have called you—
You who are more than mother unto me,
And fill my heart of hearts, where Death installed
you
In setting my Virginia's spirit free.
My mother—my own mother, who died early,
Was but the mother of myself; but you
Are mother to the one I loved so dearly,
And thus are dearer than the mother I knew
By that infinity with which my wife

THE HAUNTED PALACE

Was dearer to my soul than its soul-life.

N the greenest of our valleys
By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace—
Radiant palace—reared its head.
In the monarch Thought's dominion—
It stood there!
Never seraph spread a pinion
Over fabric half so fair!

Banners yellow, glorious, golden, On its roof did float and flow, (This—all this—was in the olden Time long ago,) And every gentle air that dallied,
In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
A wingéd odour went away.

Wanderers in that happy valley,
Through two luminous windows, saw
Spirits moving musically,
To a lute's well-tunéd law,
Round about a throne where, sitting
(Porphyrogene!)
In state his glory well befitting,
The ruler of the realm was seen.

And all with pearl and ruby glowing
Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing,
And sparkling evermore,
A troop of Echoes, whose sweet duty
Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
The wit and wisdom of their king.

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
Assailed the monarch's high estate.
(Ah, let us mourn!—for never morrow
Shall dawn upon him desolate!)
And round about his home the glory
That blushed and bloomed,
Is but a dim-remembered story
Of the old time entombed.

And travellers, now, within that valley,
Through the red-litten windows see
Vast forms, that move fantastically
To a discordant melody,

While, like a ghastly rapid river, Through the pale door A hideous throng rush out forever And laugh—but smile no more.

THE CONQUEROR WORM

O! 'tis a gala night
Within the lonesome latter years
An angel throng, bewinged, bedight
In veils, and drowned in tears,
Sit in a theatre, to see
A play of hopes and fears,
While the orchestra breathes fitfully
The music of the spheres.

Mimes, in the form of God on high,
Mutter and mumble low,
And hither and thither fly—
Mere puppets they, who come and go
At bidding of vast formless things
That shift the scenery to and fro,
Flapping from out their Condor wings
Invisible Wo!

That motley drama—oh, be sure
It shall not be forgot!
With its Phantom chased for evermore,
By a crowd that seize it not,
Through a circle that ever returneth in
To the self-same spot,
And much of Madness, and more of Sin,
And Horror the soul of the plot.

But see, amid the mimic rout
A crawling shape intrude!
A blood-red thing that writhes from out
The scenic solitude!
It writhes!—it writhes!—with mortal pangs
The mimes become its food,
And the angels sob at vermin fangs
In human gore imbued.

Out—out are the lights—out all!
And, over each quivering form,
The curtain, a funeral pall,
Comes down with the rush of a storm,
And the angels, all pallid and wan,
Uprising, unveiling, affirm
That the play is the tragedy, "Man,"
And its hero the Conqueror Worm.

TO F-s S. O-d

HOU wouldst be loved?—then let thy heart
From its present pathway part not!
Being everything which now thou art,
Be nothing which thou art not.
So with the world thy gentle ways,
Thy grace, thy more than beauty,
Shall be an endless theme of praise,
And love—a simple duty.

TO ONE IN PARADISE

HOU wast that all to me, love,
For which my soul did pine—
A green isle in the sea, love,
A fountain and a shrine,
All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers,
And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last!
Ah, starry Hope! that didst arise
But to be overcast!
A voice from out the Future cries,
"On! on!"—but o'er the Past
(Dim gulf!) my spirit hovering lies
Mute, motionless, aghast!

For, alas! alas! with me
The light of Life is o'er!
"No more—no more—no more—"
(Such language holds the solemn sea
To the sands upon the shore)
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,
Or the striken eagle soar!

And all my days are trances,
And all my nightly dreams
Are where thy dark eye glances,
And where thy footstep gleams—
In what ethereal dances,
By what eternal streams.

THE VALLEY OF REST

NCE it smiled a silent dell Where the people did not dwell; They had gone unto the wars, Trusting to the mild-eyed stars, Nightly, from their azure towers, To keep watch above the flowers, In the midst of which all day The red sun-light lazily lay. Now each visitor shall confess The sad valley's restlessness. Nothing there is motionless— Nothing save the airs that brood Over the magic solitude. Ah, by no wind are stirred those trees That palpitate like the chill seas Around the misty Hebrides! Ah, by no wind those clouds are driven That rustle through the unquiet Heaven Uneasily, from morn till even. Over the violets there that lie In myriad types of the human eve-Over the lilies there that wave And weep above a nameless grave! They wave:—from out their fragrant tops Eternal dews come down in drops. They weep:—from off their delicate stems Perennial tears descend in gems.

THE CITY IN THE SEA

O! Death has reared himself a throne
In a strange city lying alone
Far down within the dim West,
Where the good and the bad and the worst and the
best

Have gone to their eternal rest.
There shrines and palaces and towers
(Time-eaten towers that tremble not!)
Resemble nothing that is ours.
Around, by lifting winds forgot,
Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.

No rays from the holy heaven come down On the long night-time of that town; But light from out the lurid sea Streams up the turrets silently—Gleams up the pinnacles far and free—Up domes—up spires—up kingly halls—Up fanes—up Babylon-like walls—Up shadowy long-forgotten bowers Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers—Up many and many a marvellous shrine Whose wreathed friezes intertwine The viol, the violet, and the vine.

Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.
So blend the turrets and shadows there
That all seem pendulous in air,
While from a proud tower in the town
Death looks gigantically down.

There open fanes and gaping graves Yawn level with the luminous waves; But not the riches there that lie In each idol's diamond eye—
Not the gaily-jewelled dead
Tempt the waters from their bed;
For no ripples curl, alas!
Along that wilderness of glass—
No swellings tell that winds may be
Upon some far-off happier sea—
No heavings hint that winds have been
On seas less hideously serene.

But lo, a stir is in the air!
The wave—there is a movement there!
As if the towers had thrust aside,
In slightly sinking, the dull tide—
As if their tops had feebly given
A void within the filmy Heaven.
The waves have now a redder glow—
The hours are breathing faint and low—
And when, amid no earthly moans,
Down, down that town shall settle hence,
Hell, rising from a thousand thrones.
Shall do it reverence.

THE SLEEPER

T midnight, in the month of June, I stand beneath the mystic moon. An opiate vapour, dewy, dim. Exhales from out her golden rim, And, softly dripping, drop by drop, Upon the quiet mountain top, Steals drowsily and musically Into the universal valley. The rosemary nods upon the grave: The lily lolls upon the wave; Wrapping the fog about its breast, The ruin moulders into rest: Looking like Lethe, see! the lake A conscious slumber seems to take, And would not, for the world, awake. All Beauty sleeps!—and lo! where lies (Her casement open to the skies) Irene, with her Destinies!

Oh, lady bright! can it be right—
This window open to the night?
The wanton airs, from the tree-top,
Laughingly through the lattice drop—
The bodiless airs, a wizard rout,
Flit through thy chamber in and out,
And wave the curtain canopy
So fitfully—so fearfully—
Above the closed and fringed lid
'Neath which thy slumb'ring soul lies hid,
That, o'er the floor and down the wall.
Like ghosts the shadows rise and fall!

Oh, lady dear, hast thou no fear? Why and what art thou dreaming here? Sure thou are come o'er far-off seas, A wonder to these garden trees! Strange is thy pallor! strange thy dress! Strange, above all, thy length of tress, And this all solemn silentness!

The lady sleeps! Oh, may her sleep,
Which is enduring, so be deep!
Heaven have her in its sacred keep!
This chamber changed for one more holy,
This bed for one more melancholy,
I pray to God that she may lie
Forever with unopened eye,
While the dim sheeted ghosts go by!

My love, she sleeps! Oh, may her sleep As it is lasting, so be deep! Soft may the worms about her creep! Far in the forest, dim and old, For her may some tall vault unfold-Some vault that oft hath flung its black And winged pannels fluttering back, Triumphant, o'er the crested palls. Of her grand family funerals— Some sepulchre, remote, alone, Against whose portal she hath thrown. In childhood, many an idle stone— Some tomb from out whose sounding door She ne'er shall force an echo more. Thrilling to think, poor child of sin! It was the dead who groaned within.

SILENCE

HERE are some qualities—some incorporate things. That have a double life, which thus is made A type of that twin entity which springs From matter and light, evinced in solid and shade. There is a two-fold Silence—sea and shore— Body and soul. One dwells in lonely places, Newly with grass o'ergrown; some solemn graces, Some human memories and tearful lore, Render him terrorless: his name's "No More." He is the corporate Silence: dread him not! No power hath he of evil in himself; But should some urgent fate (untimely lot!) Bring thee to meet his shadow (nameless elf. That haunteth the lone regions where hath trod No foot of man,) commend thyself to God!

A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM

AKE this kiss upon the brow!
And, in parting from you now,
Thus much let me avow—
You are not wrong, who deem
That my days have been a dream;
Yet if hope has flown away
In a night, or in a day,
In a vision, or in none,
Is it therefore the less gone?
All that we see or seem
Is but a dream within a dream,

I stand amid the roar
Of a surf-tormented shore,
And I hold within my hand
Grains of the golden sand—
How few! yet how they creep
Through my fingers to the deep,
While I weep—while I weep!
O God! can I not grasp
Them with a tighter clasp?
O God! can I not save
One from the pitiless wave?
Is all that we see or seem
But a dream within a dream?

DREAM-LAND

PY a route obscure and lonely,
Haunted by ill angels only,
Where an Eidolon, named Night,
On a black throne reigns upright,
I have reached these lands but newly
From an ultimate dim Thule—
From a wild weird clime that lieth, sublime,
Out of Space—out of Time.

Bottomless vales and boundless floods, And chasms, and caves, and Titan woods, With forms that no man can discover For the dews that drip all over; Mountains toppling evermore Into seas without a shore; Seas that restlessly aspire, Surging, unto skies of fire; Lakes that endlessly outspread Their lone waters—lone and dead,— Their still waters—still and chilly With the snows of the lolling lily.

By the lakes that thus outspread
Their lone waters, lone and dead,—
Their sad waters, sad and chilly
With the snows of the lolling lily,—
By the mountains—near the river
Murmuring lowly, murmuring ever,—
By the grey woods,—by the swamp
Where the toad and the newt encamp,—
By the dismal tarns and pools

Where dwell the Ghouls,—
By each spot the most unholy—
In each nook most melancholy,—
There the traveller meets aghast
Sheeted Memories of the Past—
Shrouded forms that start and sigh
As they pass the wanderer by—
White-robed forms of friends long given,
In agony, to the Earth—and Heaven.

For the heart whose woes are legion
'Tis a peaceful, soothing region—
For the spirit that walks in shadow
'Tis—oh 'tis an Eldorado!
But the traveller, travelling through it,
May not—dare not openly view it;
Never its mysteries are exposed
To the weak human eye unclosed;
So wills its King, who hath forbid
The uplifting of the fringed lid;
And thus the sad Soul that here passes
Beholds it but through darkened glasses.

By a route obscure and lonely, Haunted by ill angels only, Where an Eidolon, named Night, On a black throne reigns upright, I have wandered home but newly From this ultimate dim Thule.

TO ZANTE

AIR isle, that from the fairest of all flowers,
Thy gentlest of all gentle names dost take!
How many memories of what radiant hours
At sight of thee and thine at once awake!
How many scenes of what departed bliss!
How many thoughts of what entombéd hopes!

How many visions of a maiden that is

No more—no more upon thy verdant slopes! No more! alas, that magical sad sound

Transforming all! Thy charms shall please *no more* Thy memory *no more!* Accurséd ground

Henceforth I hold thy flower-enamelled shore,

O hyacinthine isle! O purple Zante! "Isola d'oro! Fior di Levante!"

EULALIE

DWELT alone
In a world of moan,
And my soul was a stagnant tide,
Till the fair and gentle Eulalie became my blushing
bride—

Till the yellow-haired young Eulalie became my smiling bride.

Ah, less—less bright
The stars of the night
Than the eyes of the radiant girl!
And never a flake
That the vapour can make
With the moon-tints of purple and pearl,
Can vie with the modest Eulalie's most unregarded

curl—
Can compare with the bright-eyed Eulalie's most humble and careless curl.

Now Doubt—now Pain
Come never again,
For her soul gives me sigh for sigh,
And all day long
Shines, bright and strong,
Astarté within the sky,

While ever to her dear Eulalie upturns her matron eye—

While ever to her young Eulalie upturns her violet eye.

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ELDORADO

AILY bedight,
A gallant knight,
In sunshine and in shadow,
Had journeyed long,
Singing a song,
In search of Eldorado.

But he grew old—
This knight so bold—
And o'er his heart a shadow
Fell as he found
No spot of ground
That looked like Eldorado.

And, as his strength
Failed him at length,
He met a pilgrim shadow—
"Shadow," said he,
"Where can it be—
This land of Eldorado?"

"Over the Mountains
Of the Moon,
Down the Valley of the Shadow,
Ride, boldly ride,"
The shade replied,—
"If you seek for Eldorado!"

ISRAFEL*

N Heaven a spirit doth dwell
"Whose heart-strings are a lute;"
None sing so wildly well
As the angel Israfel,
And the giddy stars (so legends tell)
Ceasing their hymns, attend the spell
Of his voice, all mute.

Tottering above
In her highest noon,
The enamoured moon
Blushes with love,
While, to listen, the red levin
(With the rapid Pleiads, even,
Which were seven,)
Pauses in Heaven.

And they say (the starry choir
And the other listening things)
That Israfeli's fire
Is owing to that lyre
By which he sits and sings—
The trembling living wire
Of those unusual strings.

^{*} And the angel Israfel, whose heart-strings are a lute, and who has the sweetest voice of all God's creatures.—KORAN.

But the skies that angel trod,
Where deep thoughts are a duty—
Where Love's a grown up God—
Where the Houri glances are
Imbued with all the beauty
Which we worship in a star.

Therefore, thou are not wrong,
Israfeli, who despisest
An unimpassioned song;
To thee the laurels belong,
Best bard, because the wisest!
Merrily live, and long!

The ecstasies above
With thy burning measures suit—
Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,
With the fervour of thy lute—
Well may the stars be mute!

Yes, Heaven is thine; but this
Is a world of sweets and sours;
Our flowers are merely—flowers,
And the shadow of thy perfect bliss
Is the sunshine of ours.

If I could dwell
Where Israfel
Hath dwelt, and he where I,
He might not sing so wildly well
A mortal melody,
While a bolder note than this might swell
From my lyre within the sky.

FOR ANNIE

HANK Heaven! the crisis—
The danger is past,
And the lingering illness
Is over at last—
And the fever called "Living"
Is conquered at last.

Sadly, I know
I am shorn of my strength,
And no muscle I move
As I lie at full length—
But no matter!—I feel
I am better at length.

And I rest so composedly,
Now, in my bed,
That any beholder
Might fancy me dead—
Might start at beholding me,
Thinking me dead.

The moaning and groaning,
The sighing and sobbing,
Are quieted now,
With that horrible throbbing
At heart:—ah, that horrible,
Horrible throbbing!

The sickness—the nausea—
The pitiless pain—
Have ceased, with the fever
That maddened my brain—
With the fever called "Living"
That burned in my brain.

And oh! of all tortures

That torture the worst

Has abated—the terrible

Torture of thirst

For the napthaline river

Of Passion accurst:—

I have drank of a water

That quenches all thirst:—

Of a water that flows,
With a lullaby sound,
From a spring but a very few
Feet under ground—
From a cavern not very far
Down under ground.

And ah! let it never
Be foolishly said
That my room it is gloomy
And narrow my bed;
For man never slept
In a different bed—
And, to sleep, you must slumber
In just such a bed.

My tantalized spirit
Here blandly reposes,
Forgetting, or never
Regretting its roses—
Its old agitations
Of myrtles and roses:

For now, while so quietly
Lying, it fancies
A holier odor
About it, of pansies—
A rosemary odor,
Commingled with pansies—
With rue and the beautiful
Puritan pansies.

And so it lies happily,
Bathing in many
A dream of the truth
And the beauty of Annie—
Drowned in a bath
Of the tresses of Annie.

She tenderly kissed me,
She fondly caressed,
And then I fell gently
To sleep on her breast—
Deeply to sleep
From the heaven of her breast.

When the light was extinguished,
She covered me warm,
And she prayed to the angels
To keep me from harm—
To the queen of the angels
To shield me from harm.

And I lie so composedly,
Now, in my bed,
(Knowing her love)
That you fancy me dead—
And I rest so contentedly,
Now in my bed,
(With her love at my breast)
That you fancy me dead—
That you shudder to look at me,
Thinking me dead:—

But my heart it is brighter
Than all of the many
Stars in the sky,
For it sparkles with Annie—
It glows with the light
Of the love of my Annie—
With the thought of the light
Of the eyes of my Annie.

TO ____

HEED not that my earthly lot
Hath—little of Earth in it—
That years of love have been forgot
In the hatred of a minute:—
I mourn not that the desolate
Are happier, sweet, than I,
But that you sorrow for my fate
Who am a passer by.

BRIDAL BALLAD

HE ring is on my hand,
And the wreath is on my brow;
Satins and jewels grand
Are all at my command,
And I am happy now.

And my lord he loves me well;
But, when first he breathed his vow,
I felt my bosom swell—
For the words rang as a knell,
And the voice seemed his who fell
In the battle down the dell,
And who is happy now.

But he spoke to re-assure me,
And he kissed my pallid brow
While a reverie came o'er me,
And to the church-yard bore me,
And I sighed to him before me,
Thinking him dead D'Elormie,
"Oh, I am happy now!"

And thus the words were spoken,
And this the plighted vow,
And, though my faith be broken,
And, though my heart be broken,
Behold the golden token
That proves me happy now!

Would God I could awaken!
For I dream I know not how,
And my soul is sorely shaken
Lest an evil step be taken,—
Lest the dead who is forsaken
May not be happy now.

TO F-

BELOVED! amid the earnest woes
That crowd around my earthly
path—
(Drear path, alas! where grows
Not even one lonely rose)—
My soul at least a solace hath
In dreams of thee, and therein knows
An Eden of bland repose.

And thus thy memory is to me
Like some enchanted far-off isle
In some tumultuous sea—
Some ocean throbbing far and free
With storms—but where meanwhile
Serenest skies continually
Just o'er that one bright island smile.

SCENES FROM "POLITIAN"

AN UNPUBLISHED DRAMA

Ι

ROME.—A Hall in a Palace. Alessandra and Castiglione

LESSANDRA. Thou art sad, Castiglione.

Castiglione. Sad!—not I.
Oh, I'm the happiest, happiest man in Rome!
A few days more, thou knowest, my Alessandra,
Will make thee mine. Oh, I am very happy!

Aless. Methinks thou hast a singular way of showing

Thy happiness!—what ails thee, cousin of mine?

Why didst thou sigh so deeply?

Cas. Did I sigh?

I was not conscious of it. It is a fashion,

A silly—a most silly fashion I have

When I am very happy. Did I sigh? (sighing.)

Aless. Thou didst. Thou are not well. Thou

hast indulged

Too much of late, and I am vexed to see it. Late hours and wine, Castiglione,—these

Will ruin thee! thou art already altered—

Thy looks are haggard—nothing so wears away

The constitution as late hours and wine.

Cas. (musing.) Nothing, fair cousin, nothing—not even deep sorrow—

Wears it away like evil hours and wine. I will amend.

Aless. Do it! I would have thee drop
Thy riotous company, too—fellows low born—
Ill suit the like with old Di Broglio's heir
And Alessandra's husband.

Cas. I will drop them.

Aless. Thou wilt—thou must. Attend thou also more

To thy dress and equipage—they are over plain For thy lofty rank and fashion—much depends Upon appearances.

Cas. I'll see to it.

Aless. Then see to it!—pay more attention, sir, To a becoming carriage—much thou wantest In dignity.

Cas. Much, much, oh much I want

In proper dignity.

Aless. (haughtily.) Thou mockest me, sir! Cas. (abstractedly.) Sweet, gentle Lalage! Aless. Heard I aright?

I speak to him—he speaks of Lalage!

Sir Count! (places her hand on his shoulder) what art thou dreaming? he's not well!

What ails thee, sir?

Cas. (starting.) Cousin! fair cousin!—madam! I crave thy pardon—indeed I am not well—Your hand from off my shoulder, if you please. This air is most oppressive!—Madam—the Duke!

Enter Di Broglio.

Di Broglio. My son, I've news for thee!—hey?—what's the matter? (observing Alessandra). I' the pouts? Kiss her, Castiglione! kiss her, You dog! and make it up, I say, this minute! I've news for you both. Politian is expected Hourly in Rome—Politian, Earl of Leicester!

We'll have him at the wedding. 'Tis his first visit To the imperial city.

Aless. What! Politian

Of Britain, Earl of Leicester?

Di Brog. The same, my love.

We'll have him at the wedding. A man quite young In years, but grey in fame. I have not seen him, But Rumour speaks of him as of a prodigy

Pre-eminent in arts and arms, and wealth,

And high descent. We'll have him at the wedding.

Aless. I have heard much of this Politian.

Gay, volatile and giddy—is he not?

And little given to thinking.

Di Brog. Far from it, love.

No branch, they say, of all philosophy So deep abstruse he has not mastered it.

Learned as few are learned.

Aless. 'Tis very strange!

I have known men have seen Politian

And sought his company. They speak of him

As of one who entered madly into life,

Drinking the cup of pleasure to the dregs.

Cas. Ridiculous! Now I have seen Politian

And know him well—nor learned nor mirthful he.

He is a dreamer and a man shut out

From common passions.

Di Brog. Children, we disagree.

Let us go forth and taste the fragrant air Of the garden. Did I dream, or did I hear

Politian was a melancholy man? (exeunt.)

II

ROME. A Lady's apartment, with a window open and looking into a garden. Lalage, in deep mourning, reading at a table on which lie some books and a hand mirror. In the back ground Jacinta (a servant maid) leans carelessly upon a chair.

Lal. Jacinta! is it thou?

Jac. (pertly.) Yes, Ma'am, I'm here.

Lal. I did not know, Jacinta, you were in waiting. Sit down!—let not my presence trouble you—Sit down!—for I am humble, most humble.

Jac. (aside.) 'Tis time.

(Jacinta seats herself in a side-long manner upon the chair, resting her elbows upon the back, and regarding her mistress with a contemptuous look. Lalage continues to read.)

Lal. "It in another climate, so he said,

"Bore a bright golden flower, but not i' this soil!"

(pauses—turns over some leaves, and resumes.)

"No lingering winters there, nor snow, nor shower-

"But Ocean ever to refresh mankind

"Breathes the shrill spirit of the western wind."
Oh, beautiful!—most beautiful!—how like
To what my fevered soul doth dream of Heaven!
O happy land! (pauses.) She died!—the maiden died!
O still more happy maiden who couldst die!
Jacinta!

(Jacinta returns no answer, and Lalage presently resumes.)

Again!—a similar tale

Told of a beauteous dame beyond the sea!

Thus speaketh one Ferdinand in the words of the play—

"She died full young"—one Bossola answers him—

"I think not so-her infelicity.

"Seemed to have years too many"—Ah luckless lady!

Jacinta! (still no answer.)

Here's a far sterner story

But like—oh, very like in its despair—

Of that Egyptian queen, winning so easily

A thousand hearts—losing at length her own.

She died. Thus endeth the history—and her maids

Lean over her and weep—two gentle maids
With gentle names. Fires and Charmier.

With gentle names—Eiros and Charmion!

Rainbow and Dove!---Jacinta!

Jac. (pettishly.) Madam, what is it?

Lal. Wilt thou, my good Jacinta, be so kind As go down in the library and bring me

The Holy Evangelists.

Jac. Pshaw! (exit.)

Lal. If there be balm

For the wounded spirit in Gilead it is there!

Dew in the night time of my bitter trouble

Will there be found—"dew sweeter far than that Which hangs like chains of pearl on Hermon hill."

(re-enter Jacinta, and throws a volume on the table.)

There, ma'am, 's the book. Indeed she is very troublesome. (aside.)

Lal. (astonished.) What didst thou say, Jacinta? Have I done aught

To grieve thee or to vex thee?—I am sorry.

For thou hast served me long and ever been

Trust-worthy and respectful. (resumes her reading).

Jac. I can't believe

She has any more jewels—no—no—she gave me all. (aside.)

Lal. What didst thou say, Jacinta? Now I bethink me

Thou hast not spoken lately of thy wedding. How fares good Ugo?—and when is it to be? Can I do aught?—is there no farther aid Thou needest, Jacinta?

Jac. Is there no farther aid!

That's meant for me. (aside) I'm sure, Madam, you need not

Be always throwing those jewels in my teeth. Lal. Jewels! Jacinta,—now indeed, Jacinta,

I thought not of the jewels.

Jac. Oh! perhaps not!

But then I might have sworn it. After all,
There's Ugo says the ring is only paste,
For he's sure the Count Castiglione never
Would have given a real diamond to such as you;
And at the best I'm certain, Madam, you cannot
Have use for jewels now. But I might have sworn
it. (exit.)

(Lalage bursts into tears and leans her head upon the table—after a short pause raises it.)

Lal. Poor Lalage!—and is it come to this?
Thy servant maid!—but courage!—'tis but a viper
Whom thou hast cherished to sting thee to the soul!

(taking up the mirror.)

Ha! here at least's a friend—too much a friend In earlier days—a friend will not deceive thee. Fair mirror and true! now tell me (for thou canst) A tale—a pretty tale—and heed thou not Though it be rife with woe. It answers me. It speaks of sunken eyes, and wasted cheeks, And Beauty long deceased—remembers me Of Joy departed—Hope, the Seraph Hope, Inurned and entombed!—now, in a tone Low, sad, and solemn, but most audible,

Whispers of early grave untimely yawning For ruined maid. Fair mirror and true!—thou liest not!

Thou hast no end to gain—no heart to break—Castiglione lied who said he loved—

Thou true—he false!—false!—false!

(while she speaks, a monk enters her apartment, and approaches unobserved.)

Monk. Refuge thou hast,

Sweet daughter! in Heaven. Think of eternal things! Give up thy soul to penitence, and pray!

Lal. (arising hurrically.) I cannot pray!—My soul is at war with God!

The frightful sounds of merriment below Disturb my senses—go! I cannot pray—The sweet airs from the garden worry me!

Thy presence grieves me—go!—thy priestly raiment Fills me with dread—thy ebony crucifix

With horror and awe!

Monk. Think of thy precious soul!

Lal. Think of my early days!—think of my father And mother in Heaven! think of our quiet home,

And the rivulet that ran before the door!

Think of my little sisters!—think of them!

And think of me!—think of my trusting love

And confidence—his vows—my ruin—think—think

Of my unspeakable misery!—begone!

Yet stay! yet stay!—what was it thou saidst of prayer

And penitence? Didst thou not speak of faith And vows before the throne?

Monk. I did.

Lal. 'Tis well.

There is a vow were fitting should be made—A sacred vow, imperative, and urgent,

A solemn vow!

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Monk. Daughter, this zeal is well!

Lal. Father, this zeal is anything but well!

Hast thou a crucifix fit for this thing?

A crucifix whereon to register

This sacred vow? (he hands her his own.)

Not that—Oh! no!—no!—no! (shuddering.)

Not that! Not that!—I tell thee, holy man.

Thy raiments and thy ebony cross affright me!

Stand back! I have a crucifix myself,—

I have a crucifix! Methinks 'twere fitting

The deed—the vow—the symbol of the deed—

And the deed's register should tally, father!

(draws a cross-handled dagger and raises it on high.)

Behold the cross wherewith a vow like mine Is written in Heaven!

Monk. Thy words are madness, daughter, And speak a purpose unholy—thy lips are livid— Thine eyes are wild—tempt not the wrath divine! Pause ere too late!—oh be not—be not rash! Swear not the oath—oh, swear it not!

Lal. 'Tis sworn!

III

An apartment in a palace. Politian and Baldazzar.

Baldazzar.——Arouse thee now, Politian!
Thou must not—nay indeed, indeed, thou shalt not
Give way unto these humours. Be thyself!
Shake off the idle fancies that beset thee,
And live, for now thou diest!

Politian. Not so, Baldazzar! Surely I live.

Bal. Politian, it doth grieve me To see thee thus.

Pol. Baldazzar, it doth grieve me
To give thee cause for grief, my honoured friend.
Command me, sir! what wouldst thou have me do?
At thy behest I will shake off that nature
Which from my forefathers I did inherit,
Which with my mother's milk I did imbibe,
And be no more Politian, but some other.
Command me, sir!

Bal. To the field then—to the field—To the senate or the field.

Pol. Alas! alas!

There is an imp would follow me even there! There is an imp *hath* followed me even there! There is—what voice was that?

Bal. I heard it not.

I heard not any voice except thine own, And the echo of thine own.

Pol. Then I but dreamed.

Bal. Give not thy soul to dreams: the camp—the court.

Befit thee—Fame awaits thee—Glory calls—And her the trumpet-tongued thou wilt not hear In hearkening to imaginary sounds
And phantom voices.

Pol. It is a phantom voice! Didst thou not hear it then?

Bal. I heard it not.

Pol. Thou heardst it not!—Baldazzar, speak no more

To me, Politian, of thy camps and courts.
Oh! I am sick, sick, sick, even unto death,
Of the hollow and high-sounding vanities
Of the populous Earth! Bear with me yet awhile!
We have been boys together—school-fellows—
And now are friends—yet shall not be so long—
For in the eternal city thou shalt do me

A kind and gentle office, and a Power— A Power august, benignant and supreme— Shall then absolve thee of all farther duties Unto thy friend.

Bal. Thou speakest a fearful riddle I will not understand.

Pol. Yet now as Fate

Approaches, and the Hours are breathing low, The sands of Time are changed to golden grains, And dazzle me, Baldazzar. Alas! alas! I cannot die, having within my heart So keen a relish for the beautiful As hath been kindled within it. Methinks the air Is balmier now than it was wont to be—Rich melodies are floating in the winds—A rarer loveliness bedecks the earth—And with a holier lustre the quiet moon Sitteth in Heaven.—Hist! hist! thou canst not say Thou hearest not now, Baldazzar?

Bal. Indeed I hear not.

Pol. Not hear it!—listen now—listen!—the faintest sound

And yet the sweetest that ear ever heard! A lady's voice!—and sorrow in the tone! Baldazzar, it oppresses me like a spell! Again!—again!—how solemnly it falls Into my heart of hearts! that eloquent voice Surely I never heard—yet it were well Had I but heard it with its thrilling tones In earlier days!

Bal. I myself hear it now.

Be still!—the voice, if I mistake not greatly, Proceeds from yonder lattice—which you may see Very plainly through the window—it belongs, Does it not? unto this palace of the Duke. The singer is undoubtedly beneath

The roof of his Excellency—and perhaps Is even that Alessandra of whom he spoke As the betrothed of Castiglione. His son and heir.

Pol. Be still!—it comes again!

Voice "And is thy heart so strong

(very faintly.) As for to leave me thus

Who hath loved thee so long In wealth and wo among? And is thy heart so strong As for to leave me thus?

Say nay-say nay!"

Bal. The song is English, and I oft have heard it In merry England—never so plaintively— Hist! hist! it comes again!

Voice

"Is it so strong

(more loudly.) As for to leave me thus

Who hath loved thee so long In wealth and wo among? And is thy heart so strong As for to leave me thus?

Say nay-say nay!"

Bal. 'Tis hushed and all is still!

Pol. All is not still.

Bal. Let us go down.

Pol. Go down, Baldazzar, go!

Bal. The hour is growing late—the Duke awaits us,--

Thy presence is expected in the hall Below. What ails thee, Earl Politian?

Voice "Who hath loved thee so long,

(distinctly.) In wealth and wo among, And is thy heart so strong?

Say nay-say nay!"

Bal. Let us descend!—'tis time. Politian, give These fancies to the wind. Remember, pray,

Your bearing lately savoured much of rudeness
Unto the Duke. Arouse thee! and remember!

Pol. Remember? I do. Lead on! I do remember.

(going.)

Let us descend. Believe me I would give, Freely would give the broad lands of my earldom To look upon the face hidden by you lattice— "To gaze upon that veiled face, and hear Once more that silent tongue."

Bal. Let me beg you, sir,

Descend with me—the Duke may be offended.

Let us go down, I pray you.

(Voice loudly.) Say nay!—say nay!
Pol. (aside.) 'Tis strange!—'tis very strange—

methought the voice Chimed in with my desires and bade me stay! (approaching the window.)

Sweet voice! I heed thee, and will surely stay. Now be this Fancy, by Heaven, or be it Fate, Still will I not descend. Baldazzar, make Apology unto the Duke for me; I go not down to-night.

Bal. Your lordship's pleasure Shall be attended to. Good night, Politian. Pol. Good night, my friend, good night.

IV.

The gardens of a palace—Moonlight. Lalage and Politian.

Lalage. And dost thou speak of love
To me, Politian?—dost thou speak of love
To Lalage?—ah wo—ah wo is me!
This mockery is most cruel—most cruel indeed!
Politian. Weep not! oh, sob not thus!—thy bitter
tears

Will madden me. Oh mourn not, Lalage-Be comforted! I know—I know it all, And still I speak of love. Look at me, brightest, And beautiful Lalage!-turn here thine eves! Thou askest me if I could speak of love. Knowing what I know, and seeing what I have seen. Thou askest me that—and thus I answer thee— Thus on my bended knee I answer thee. (kneeling.) Sweet Lalage, I love thee—love thee: Thro' good and ill—thro' weal and wo I love thee. Not mother, with her first born on her knee, Thrills with intenser love than I for thee. Not on God's altar, in any time or clime, Burned there a holier fire than burneth now Within my spirit for thee. And do I love? (arising.) Even for thy woes I love thee—even for thy woes— Thy beauty and thy woes.

Lal. Alas, proud Earl,
Thou dost forget thyself, remembering me!
How, in thy father's halls, among the maidens
Pure and reproachless of thy princely line,
Could the dishonoured Lalage abide?
Thy wife, and with a tainted memory—
My seared and blighted name, how would it tally
With the ancestral honours of thy house,

And with thy glory?

Pol. Speak not to me of glory!
I hate—I loathe the name; I do abhor
The unsatisfactory and ideal thing.
Art thou not Lalage and I Politian?
Do I not love—art thou not beautiful—
What need we more? Ha! glory!—now speak not of it.

By all I hold most sacred and most solemn— By all my wishes now—my fears hereafter— By all I scorn on earth and hope in heavenThere is no deed I would more glory in,
Than in thy cause to scoff at this same glory
And trample it under foot. What matters it—
What matters it, my fairest, and my best,
That we go down unhonoured and forgotten
Into the dust—so we descend together.
Descend together—and then—and then perchance—

Lal. Why dost thou pause, Politian?

Pol. And then perchance

Arise together, Lalage, and roam

The starry and quiet dwellings of the blest,

And still----

Lal. Why dost thou pause, Politian?

Pol. And still together-together.

Lal. Now Earl of Leicester!

Thou *lovest* me, and in my heart of hearts I feel thou lovest me truly.

Pol. Oh, Lalage! (throwing himself upon his knee.)

And lovest thou me?

Lal. Hist! hush! within the gloom

Of yonder trees methought a figure past—

A spectral figure, solemn, and slow, and noiseless— Like the grim shadow Conscience, solemn and

noiseless. (walks across and returns.)

I was mistaken—'twas but a giant bough Stirred by the autumn wind. Politian!

Pol. My Lalage—my love! why art thou moved? Why dost thou turn so pale? Not Conscience' self, Far less a shadow which thou likenest to it,

Should shake the firm spirit thus. But the night wind

Is chilly—and these melancholy boughs Throw over all things a gloom.

Lal. Politian!

Thou speakest to me of love. Knowest thou the

With which all tongues are busy—a land new found—

Miraculously found by one of Genoa—A thousand leagues within the golden west? A fairy land of flowers, and fruit, and sunshine, And crystal lakes, and over-arching forests, And mountains, around whose towering summits the winds

Of Heaven untrammelled flow—which air to breathe Is Happiness now, and will be Freedom hereafter In days that are to come?

Pol. O, wilt thou—wilt thou
Fly to that Paradise—my Lalage, wilt thou
Fly thither with me? There Care shall be forgotten,
And Sorrow shall be no more, and Eros be all.
And life shall then be mine, for I will live
For thee, and in thine eyes—and thou shalt be
No more a mourner—but the radiant Joys
Shall wait upon thee, and the angel Hope
Attend thee ever; and I will kneel to thee
And worship thee, and call thee my beloved,
My own, my beautiful, my love, my wife,
My all;—oh, wilt thou—wilt thou, Lalage,
Fly thither with me?

Lal. A deed is to be done—

Castiglione lives!

Pol. And he shall die! (exit.)

Lal. (after a pause.) And—he—shall—die!——alas!

Castiglione die? Who spoke the words?
Where am I?—what was it he said?—Politian!
Thou art not gone—thou art not gone, Politian!
I feel thou art not gone—yet dare not look,
Lest I behold thee not; thou couldst not go
With those words upon thy lips—O, speak to me!
And let me hear thy voice—one word—one word,

To say thou art not gone,—one little sentence,
To say how thou dost scorn—how thou dost hate
My womanly weakness. Ha!ha!thou art not gone—
O speak to me! I knew thou wouldst not go!
I knew thou wouldst not, couldst not, durst not go.
Villain, thou art not gone—thou mockest me!
And thus I clutch thee—thou!——He is gone, he
is gone—

Gone—gone. Where am I?——'tis well—'tis very well!

So that the blade be keen—the blow be sure, 'Tis well, 'tis very well—alas! alas!

V

The suburbs. Politian alone.

Politian. This weakness grows upon me. I am faint,

And much I fear me ill—it will not do
To die ere I have lived!—Stay—stay thy hand,
O Azrael, yet awhile!—Prince of the Powers
Of Darkness and the Tomb, O pity me!
O pity me! let me not perish now,
In the budding of my Paradisal Hope!
Give me to live yet—yet a little while:
'Tis I who pray for life—I who so late
Demanded but to die!—what sayeth the Count?

Enter Baldazzar.

Baldazzar. That knowing no cause of quarrel or of feud

Between the Earl Politian and himself, He doth decline your cartel.

Pol. What didst thou say?

What answer was it you brought me, good Baldazzar? With what excessive fragrance the zephyr comes

Laden from yonder bowers!—a fairer day,
Or one more worthy Italy, methinks
No mortal eyes have seen!—what said the Count?
Bal. That he, Castiglione, not being aware
Of any feud existing, or any cause
Of quarrel between your lordship and himself

Cannot accept the challenge.

Pol. It is most true—

All this is very true. When saw you, sir, When saw you now, Baldazzar, in the frigid Ungenial Britain which we left so lately, A heaven so calm as this—so utterly free From the evil taint of clouds?—and he did say?

Bal. No more, my lord, than I have told you, sir: The Count Castiglione will not fight,

Having no cause for quarrel.

Pol. Now this is true—

All very true. Thou art my friend, Baldazzar, And I have not forgotten it—thou'lt do me A piece of service; wilt thou go back and say Unto this man, that I, the Earl of Leicester, Hold him a villain?—thus much, I prythee, say Unto the Count—it is exceeding just He should have cause for quarrel.

Bal. My lord!—my friend!—

Pol. (aside.) 'Tis he—he comes himself! (aloud.) thou reasonest well.

I know what thou wouldst say—not send the message—

Well!—I will think of it—I will not send it.

Now prythee, leave me—hither doth come a person
With whom affairs of a most private nature
I would adjust.

Bal. I go—to-morrow we meet, Do we not?—at the Vatican.

Pol. At the Vatican.

(exit Bal.)

Enter Castiglione.

Cas. The Earl of Leicester here!

Pol. I am the Earl of Leicester, and thou seest, Dost thou not? that I am here.

Cas. My lord, some strange,

Some singular mistake—misunderstanding— Hath without doubt arisen: thou hast been urged Thereby, in heat of anger, to address

Some words most unaccountable, in writing,

To me, Castiglione; the bearer being

Baldazzar, Duke of Surrey. I am aware

Of nothing which might warrant thee in this thing, Having given thee no offence. Ha!—am I right?

'Twas a mistake?—undoubtedly—we all

Do err at times.

Pol. Draw, villain, and prate no more!

Cas. Ha!—draw?—and villain? have at thee then at once,

Proud Earl! (draws.)

Pol. (drawing.) Thus to the expiratory tomb,

Untimely sepulchre, I do devote thee

In the name of Lalage!

Cas. (letting fall his sword and recoiling to the extremity of the stage.)

Of Lalage!

Hold off—thy sacred hand!—avaunt I say!

Avaunt—I will not fight thee—indeed I dare not.

Pol. Thou wilt not fight with me didst say, Sir Count?

Shall I be baffled thus?—now this is well; Didst say thou *darest* not? Ha!

Cas. I dare not—dare not—

Hold off thy hand—with that beloved name So fresh upon thy lips I will not fight thee—I cannot—dare not.

Pol. Now by my halidom

I do believe thee!—coward, I do believe thee!

Cas. Ha!—coward!—this may not be!

(clutches his sword and staggers towards Politian, but his purpose is changed before reaching him, and he falls upon his knee at the feet of the Earl.)

Alas! my lord,

It is—it is—most true. In such a cause

I am the veriest coward. O pity me!

Pol. (greatly softened.) Alas!—I do—indeed I pity thee

Cas. And Lalage

Pol. Scoundrel!—arise and die!

Cas. It needeth not be—thus—thus—O let me die Thus on my bended knee. It were most fitting That in this deep humiliation I perish. For in the fight I will not raise a hand

Against thee, Earl of Leicester. Strike thou home— (baring his bosom.)

Here is no let or hindrance to thy weapon— Strike home. I will not fight thee.

Pol. Now s'Death and Hell!

Am I not—am I not sorely—grievously tempted To take thee at thy word? But mark me, sir! Think not to fly me thus. Do thou prepare For public insult in the streets—before The eyes of the citizens. I'll follow thee—Like an avenging spirit I'll follow thee Even unto death. Before those whom thou lovest—Before all Rome I'll taunt thee, villain,—I'll taunt

thee,
Dost hear? with cowardice—thou wilt not fight me?
Thou liest! thou shalt! (exit.)

Cas. Now this indeed is just!

Most righteous, and most just, avenging Heaven.

POEMS WRITTEN IN YOUTH*

SONNET-TO SCIENCE

Who alterest all things with thy peering eyes
Why preyest thou thus upon the poet's heart,
Vulture, whose wings are dull realities?
How should he love thee? or how deem thee wise,
Who wouldst not leave him in his wandering
To seek for treasure in the jewelled skies,
Albeit he soared with an undaunted wing?
Hast thou not dragged Diana from her car?
And driven the Hamadryad from the wood
To seek a shelter in some happier star?
Hast thou not torn the Naiad from her flood,
The Elfin from the green grass, and from me
The summer dream beneath the tamarind tree?

*Private reasons—some of which have reference to the sin of plagiarism, and others to the date of Tennyson's first poems—have induced me, after some hesitation, to re-publish these, the crude compositions of my earliest boyhood. They are printed verbatim—without alteration from the original edition—the date of which is too remote to be judiciously acknowledged.

E. A. P.

AL AARAAF*

PART I

! NOTHING earthly save the ray
(Thrown back from flowers) of Beauty's eye,
As in those gardens where the day
Springs from the gems of Circassy—
O! nothing earthly save the thrill
Of melody in woodland rill—
Or (music of the passion-hearted)
Joy's voice so peacefully departed
That like the murmur in the shell,
Its echo dwelleth and will dwell—
Oh, nothing of the dross of ours—
Yet all the beauty—all the flowers
That list our Love, and deck our bowers—
Adorn yon world afar, afar—
The wandering star.

'Twas a sweet time for Nesace—for there
Her world lay lolling on the golden air,
Near four bright suns—a temporary rest—
An oasis in desert of the blest.
Away—away—'mid seas of rays that roll
Empyrean splendor o'er th' unchained soul—
The soul that scarce (the billows are so dense)
Can struggle to its destin'd eminence—
To distant spheres, from time to time, she rode,
And late to ours, the favour'd one of God—

^{*} A star was discovered by Tycho Brahe which appeared suddenly in the heavens—attained, in a few days, a brilliancy surpassing that of Jupiter—then as suddenly disappeared, and has never been seen since.

But, now, the ruler of an anchor'd realm, She throws aside the sceptre—leaves the helm, And, amid incense and high spiritual hymns, Laves in quadruple light her angel limbs.

Now happiest, loveliest in yon lovely Earth, Whence sprang the "Idea of Beauty" into birth, (Falling in wreaths thro' many a startled star, Like woman's hair 'mid pearls, until, afar, It lit on hills Achaian, and there dwelt) She look'd into Infinity—and knelt. Rich clouds, for canopies, about her curled—Fit emblems of the model of her world—Seen but in beauty—not impeding sight Of other beauty glittering thro' the light—A wreath that twined each starry form around, And all the opal'd air in color bound.

All hurriedly she knelt upon a bed Of flowers: of lilies such as rear'd the head *On the fair Capo Deucato, and sprang So eagerly around about to hang Upon the flying footsteps of—deep pride— †Of her who lov'd a mortal—and so died. The Sephalica, budding with young bees, Uprear'd its purple stem around her knees: ‡And gemmy flower, of Trebizond misnam'd-Inmate of highest stars, where erst it sham'd All other loveliness: its honied dew (The fabled nectar that the heathen knew) Deliriously sweet, was dropp'd from Heaven, And fell on gardens of the unforgiven In Trebizond—and on a sunny flower So like its own above that, to this hour.

^{*} On Santa Maura—olim Deucadia.

[†] Sappho.
‡ This flower is much noticed by Lewenhoeck and Tournefort.
The bee, feeding upon its blossom, becomes intoxicated.

It still remaineth, torturing the bee With madness, and unwonted reverie: In Heaven, and all its environs, the leaf And blossom of the fairy plant, in grief Disconsolate linger—grief that hangs her head, Repenting follies that full long have fled, Heaving her white breast to the balmy air, Like guilty beauty, chasten'd, and more fair: Nyctanthes too, as sacred as the light She fears to perfume, perfuming the night: *And Clytia pondering between many a sun, While pettish tears adown her petals run: †And that aspiring flower that sprang on Earth And died, ere scarce exalted into birth, Bursting its odorous heart in spirit to wing Its way to Heaven, from garden of a king: ‡And Valisnerian lotus thither flown From struggling with the waters of the Rhone: §And thy most lovely purple perfume, Zante! Isola d'oro!—Fior di Levante! ||And the Nelumbo bud that floats for ever With Indian Cupid down the holy river—

* Clytia—The Chrysanthemum Peruvianum, or, to employ a better-known term, the turnsol—which turns continually towards the sun, covers itself, like Peru, the country from which it comes, with dewy clouds which cool and refresh its flowers during the most violent heat of the day.—B. de St. Pierre.

† There is cultivated in the king's garden at Paris, a species of serpentine aloes without prickles, whose large and beautiful flower exhales a strong odour of the vanilla, during the time of its expansion, which is very short. It does not blow till towards the month of July—you then perceive it gradually open its petals—expansion—fade and die.—St. Pierre.

† There is found, in the Rhone, a beautiful lily of the Valisnerian kind. Its stem will stretch to the length of three or four feet—thus preserving its head above water in the swellings of

the river.

§ The Hyacinth.

|| It is a fiction of the Indians, that Cupid was first seen floating in one of these down the river Ganges—and that he still loves the cradle of his childhood.

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Fair flowers, and fairy! to whose care is given *To bear the Goddess' song, in odors, up to Heaven:

"Spirit! that dwellest where, In the deep sky, The terrible and fair. In beauty vie! Beyond the line of blue— The boundary of the star Which turneth at the view Of thy barrier and thy bar-Of the barrier overgone By the comets who were cast From their pride, and from their throne To be drudges till the last— To be carriers of fire (The red fire of their heart) With speed that may not tire And with pain that shall not part— Who livest—that we know— In Eternity—we feel— But the shadow of whose brow What spirit shall reveal? Tho' the beings whom thy Nesace, Thy messenger hath known Have dream'd for thy Infinity †A model of their own—

* And golden vials full of odors which are the prayers of the saints.—Rev. St. John.

† The Humanitarians held that God was to be understood as having really a human form.—Vide Clarke's Sermons, vol. 1,

page 26, fol. edit.

The drift of Milton's argument, leads him to employ language which would appear, at first sight, to verge upon their doctrine; but it will be seen immediately, that he guards himself against the charge of having adopted one of the most ignorant errors of the dark ages of the church.—Dr. Sumner's Notes on Milton's Christian Doctrine.

This opinion, in spite of many testimonies to the contrary.

Thy will is done, Oh, God!
The star hath ridden high
Thro' many a tempest, but she rode
Beneath thy burning eye;
And here, in thought, to thee—
In thought that can alone
Ascend thy empire and so be
A partner of thy throne—
*By winged Fantasy,
My embassy is given,
Till secrecy shall knowledge be
In the environs of Heaven."

She ceas'd—and buried then her burning cheek Abash'd, amid the lilies there, to seek A shelter from the fervour of His eye; For the stars trembled at the Deity. She stirr'd not—breath'd not—for a voice was there How solemnly pervading the calm air! A sound of silence on the startled ear Which dreamy poets name "the music of the sphere." Ours is a world of words: Quiet we call "Silence"—which is the merest word of all. All Nature speaks, and ev'n ideal things Flap shadowy sounds from visionary wings—

could never have been very general. Andeus, a Syrian of Mesopotamia, was condemned for the opinion, as heretical. He lived in the beginning of the fourth century. His disciples were called Anthropmorphites.—Vide Du Pin.

Among Milton's minor poems are these lines:—

Dicite sacrorum præsides nemorum Deæ, &c.
Quis ille primus cujus ex imagine
Natura solers finxit humanum genus?
Eternus, incorruptus, æquævus polo,
Unusque et universus exemplar Dei.—And afterwards,
Non cui profundum Cæcitas lumen dedit
Dicæus augur vidit hunc alto sinu, &c.

^{*} Seltsamen Tochter Jovis Seinem Schosskinde Der Phantasie.—Gæthe.

But ah! not so when, thus, in realms on high The eternal voice of God is passing by, And the red winds are withering in the sky!

*"What tho' in worlds which sightless cycles run, Link'd to a little system, and one sun-Where all my love is folly and the crowd Still think my terrors but the thunder cloud, The storm, the earthquake, and the ocean-wrath— (Ah! will they cross me in my angrier path?) What tho' in worlds which own a single sun The sands of Time grow dimmer as they run, Yet thine is my resplendency, so given To bear my secrets thro' the upper Heaven. Leave tenantless thy crystal home, and fly, With all thy train, athwart the moony sky-†Apart—like fire-flies in Sicilian night, And wing to other worlds another light! Divulge the secrets of thy embassy To the proud orbs that twinkle—and so be To ev'ry heart a barrier and a ban Lest the stars totter in the guilt of man!"

Up rose the maiden in the yellow night, The single-mooned eve!—on Earth we plight Our faith to one love—and one moon adore— The birth-place of young Beauty had no more. As sprang that yellow star from downy hours Up rose the maiden from her shrine of flowers. And bent o'er sheeny mountain and dim plain ‡Her way—but left not yet her Therasæan reign.

* Sightless—too small to be seen.—Legge. † I have often noticed a peculiar movement of the fire-flies;
they will collect in a body and fly off, from a common centre,

into innumerable radii.

† Therasæa, or Therasea, the island mentioned by Seneca, which, in a moment, arose from the sea to the eyes of astonished mariners.

PART II

TIGH on a mountain of enamell'd head-Such as the drowsy shepherd on his bed Of giant pasturage lying at his ease, Raising his heavy eyelid, starts and sees With many a mutter'd "hope to be forgiven" What time the moon is quadrated in Heaven— Of rosy head, that towering far away Into the sunlit ether, caught the ray Of sunken suns at eve-at noon of night, While the moon danc'd with the fair stranger light-Uprear'd upon such height arose a pile Of gorgeous columns on th' unburthen'd air, Flashing from Parian marble that twin smile Far down upon the wave that sparkled there. And nursled the young mountain in its lair. *Of molten stars their pavement, such as fall Thro' the ebon air, besilvering the pall Of their own dissolution, while they die-Adorning then the dwellings of the sky. A dome, by linked light from Heaven let down, Sat gently on these columns as a crown— A window of one circular diamond, there, Look'd out above into the purple air, And ravs from God shot down that meteor chain And hallow'd all the beauty twice again, Save when, between th' Empyrean and that ring, Some eager spirit flapp'd his dusky wing. But on the pillars Seraph eyes have seen The dimness of this world: that greyish green That nature loves the best for Beauty's grave Lurk'd in each cornice, round each architrave-

^{*} Some star which, from the ruin'd roof Of shak'd Olympus, by mischance, did fall.—Milton.

And every sculptur'd cherub thereabout That from his marble dwelling peered out, Seem'd earthly in the shadow of his niche-Achaian statues in a world so rich? *Friezes from Tadmor and Persepolis-From Balbec, and the stilly, clear abyss †Of beautiful Gomorrah! O, the wave Is now upon thee—but too late to save!

Sound loves to revel in a summer night: Witness the murmur of the grey twilight That stole upon the ear, in Eyraco, Of many a wild star-gazer long ago-That stealeth ever on the ear of him Who, musing, gazeth on the distance dim, And sees the darkness coming as a cloud— §Is not its form—its voice—most palpable and loud?

But what is this?—it cometh—and it brings A music with it—'tis the rush of wings— A pause—and then a sweeping, falling strain And Nesace is in her halls again.

* Voltaire, in speaking of Persepolis, says, "Je connois bien l'admiration qu'inspirent ces ruines—mais un palais erigé au pied d'une chaine des rochers sterils—peut il être un chef d'œuvre des arts!"

† "Oh! the wave"—Ula Deguisi is the Turkish appellation; but, on its own shores, it is called Bahar Loth, or Almotanah. There were undoubtedly more than two cities engulphed in the "dead sea." In the valley of Siddim were five—Adrah, Zeboin, Zoar, Sodom and Gomorrah. Stephen of Byzantium mentions eight, and Strabo thirteen, (engulphed)—but the last is out of all reason.

It is said, [Tacitus, Strabo, Josephus, Daniel of St. Saba, Nau, Maundrell, Troilo, D'Arvieux] that after an excessive drought, the vestiges of columns, walls, &c., are seen above the surface. At any season, such remains may be discovered by looking down into the transparent lake, and as such distances as would argue the existence of many settlements in the

space now usurped by the 'Asphaltites.'

‡ Eyraco-Chaldea.

§ I have often thought I could distinctly hear the sound of the darkness as it stole over the horizon.

From the wild energy of wanton haste
Her cheeks were flushing, and her lips apart;
And zone that clung around her gentle waist

Had burst beneath the heaving of her heart. Within the centre of that hall to breathe She paus'd and panted, Zanthe! all beneath, The fairy light that kiss'd her golden hair And long'd to rest, yet could but sparkle there!

*Young flowers were whispering in melody
To happy flowers that night—and tree to tree;
Fountains were gushing music as they fell
In many a star-lit grove, or moon-lit dell;
Yet silence came upon material things—
Fair flowers, bright waterfalls and angel wings—
And sound alone that from the spirit sprang
Bore burthen to the charm the maiden sang:

"'Neath blue-bell or streamer—
Or tufted wild spray
That keeps, from the dreamer,
†The moonbeam away—
Bright beings! that ponder,
With half closing eyes,
On the stars which your wonder
Hath drawn from the skies,
Till they glance thro' the shade, and
Come down to your brow
Like—eyes of the maiden
Who calls on you now—

* Fairies use flowers for their charactery—Merry Wives of Windsor.

[†] In Scripture is this passage—"The sun shall not harm thee by day, nor the moon by night." It is perhaps not generally known that the moon, in Egypt, has the effect of producing blindness to those who sleep with the face exposed to its rays, to which circumstance the passage evidently alludes,

Arise! from your dreaming In violet bowers, To duty beseeming These star-litten hours— And shake from your tresses Encumber'd with dew The breath of those kisses That cumber them too— (O! how, without you, Love! Could angels be blest?) Those kisses of true love That lull'd ve to rest! Up!—shake from your wing Each hindering thing: The dew of the night— It would weigh down your flight; And true love caresses— O! leave them apart! They are light on the tresses. But lead on the heart.

Ligeia! Ligeia!
My beautiful one!
Whose harshest idea
Will to melody run,
O! is it thy will
On the breezes to toss?
Or, capriciously still,
*Like the lone Albatross,
Incumbent on night
(As she on the air)
To keep watch with delight
On the harmony there?

The Albatross is said to sleep on the wing.

Ligeia! wherever Thy image may be, No magic shall sever Thy music from thee. Thou hast bound many eves In a dreamy sleep— But the strains still arise Which thy vigilance keep— The sound of the rain Which leaps down to the flower. And dances again In the rhythm of the shower— *The murmur that springs From the growing of grass Are the music of things— But are modell'd, alas!-Away, then my dearest, O! hie thee away To springs that lie clearest Beneath the moon-ray— To lone lake that smiles. In its dream of deep rest, At the many star-isles That enjewel its breast— Where wild flowers, creeping, Have mingled their shade, On its margin is sleeping Full many a maid— Some have left the cool glade, and †Have slept with the bee-

^{*}I met with this idea in an old English tale, which I am now unable to obtain and quote from memory:—"The verie essence and, as it were, springeheade and origine of all musiche is the verie pleasaunte sounde which the trees of the forest do make when they growe."

[†] The wild bee will not sleep in the shade if there be moon-

ight.
The rhyme in this verse, as in one about sixty lines before, has

Arouse them my maiden,
On moorland and lea—
Go! breathe on their slumber,
All softly in ear,
The musical number
They slumber'd to hear—
For what can awaken
An angel so soon
Whose sleep hath been taken
Beneath the cold moon,
As the spell which no slumber
Of witchery may test,
The rhythmical number
Which hull'd him to rest?"

Spirits in wing, and angels to the view,
A thousand seraphs burst th' Empyrean thro',
Young dreams still hovering on their drowsy flight—
Seraphs in all but "Knowledge," the keen light
That fell, refracted, thro' thy bounds, afar
O Death! from eye of God upon that star:
Sweet was that error—sweeter still that death—
Sweet was that error—ev'n with us the breath
Of Science dims the mirror of our joy—
To them 'twere the Simoom, and would destroy—
For what (to them) availeth it to know
That Truth is Falsehood—or that Bliss is Woe?
Sweet was their death—with them to die was rife
With the last ecstasy of satiate life—
Beyond that death no immortality—

an appearance of affectation. It is, however, imitated from Sir W. Scott, or rather from Claud Halcro—in whose mouth I admired its effect.

O! were there an island, Tho' ever so wild
Where woman might smile, and
No man be beguil'd, &c,

But sleep that pondereth and is not "to be"— And there—oh! may my weary spirit dwell— *Apart from Heaven's Eternity—and yet how far from Hell!

What guilty spirit, in what shrubbery dim, Heard not the stirring summons of that hymn? But two: they fell: for Heaven no grace imparts To those who hear not for their beating hearts. A maiden-angel and her seraph-lover— O! where (and ye may seek the wide skies over) Was Love, the blind, near sober Duty known? †Unguided Love hath fallen—'mid "tears of perfect moan."

He was a goodly spirit—he who fell: A wanderer by moss-y-mantled well-A gazer on the lights that shine above— A dreamer in the moonbeam by his love: What wonder? for each star is eye-like there, And looks so sweetly down on Beauty's hair-

* With the Arabians there is a medium between Heaven and Hell, where men suffer no punishment, but yet do not attain that tranquil and even happiness which they suppose to be characteristic of heavenly enjoyment.

Un no rompido sueno-Un dia puro-allegre-libre

Quiera-

Libre de amor—de zelo— De odio—de esperanza—de rezelo.—Luis Ponce de

Sorrow is not excluded from "Al Aaraaf," but it is that sorrow which the living love to cherish for the dead, and which, in some minds, resembles the delirium of opium. The passionate excitement of Love and the buoyancy of spirit attendant upon intoxication are its less holy pleasures—the price of which, to those souls who make choice of "Al Aaraaf" as their residence after life, is final death and annihilation.

> † There be tears of perfect moan Wept for thee in Helicon.—Milton.

And they, and ev'ry mossy spring were holy
To his love-haunted heart and melancholy.
The night had found (to him a night of wo)
Upon a mountain crag, young Angelo—
Beetling it bends athwart the solemn sky,
And scowls on starry worlds that down beneath it
lie.

Here sate he with his love—his dark eye bent With eagle gaze along the firmament: Now turn'd it upon her—but ever then It trembled to the orb of Earth again.

"Ianthe, dearest, see! how dim that ray! How lovely 'tis to look so far away! She seem'd not thus upon that autumn eve I left her gorgeous halls—nor mourn'd to leave. That eve—that eve—I should remember well— The sun-ray dropp'd, in Lemnos, with a spell On th' Arabesque carving of a gilded hall Wherein I sate, and on the draperied wall— And on my eye-lids—O the heavy light! How drowsily it weigh'd them into night! On flowers, before, and mist, and love they ran With Persian Saadi in his Gulistan: But O that light!—I slumber'd—Death, the while Stole o'er my senses in that lovely isle So softly that no single silken hair Awoke that slept—or knew that he was there.

The last spot of Earth's orb I trod upon *Was a proud temple call'd the Parthenon—More beauty clung around her column'd wall †Than ev'n thy glowing bosom beats withal,

^{*}It was entire in 1687—the most elevated spot in Athens. †Shadowing more beauty in their airy brows
Than have the white breasts of the Queen of Love.—
Marlowe.

And when old Time my wing did disenthral Thence sprang I—as the eagle from his tower, And years I left behind me in an hour. What time upon her airy bounds I hung One half the garden of her globe was flung Unrolling as a chart unto my view—Tenantless cities of the desert too! Ianthe, beauty crowded on me then, And half I wish'd to be again of men."

"My Angelo! and why of them to be?
A brighter dwelling-place is here for thee—
And greener fields than in yon world above,
And woman's loveliness—and passionate love."

"But, list, Ianthe! when the air so soft
*Fail'd, as my pennon'd spirit leapt aloft,
Perhaps my brain grew dizzy—but the world
I left so late was into chaos hurl'd—
Sprang from her station, on the winds apart,
And roll'd, a flame, the fiery Heaven athwart.
Methought, my sweet one, then I ceased to soar
And fell—not swiftly as I rose before;
But with a downward, tremulous motion thro'
Light, brazen rays, this golden star unto!
Nor long the measure of my falling hours,
For nearest of all stars was thine to ours—
Dread star! that came, amid a night of mirth,
A red Dædalion on the timid Earth.

"We came—and to thy Earth—but not to us Be given our lady's bidding to discuss: We came, my love; around, above, below, Gay fire-fly of the night we come and go,

^{*} Pennon-for pinion.-Milton.

Nor ask a reason save the angel-nod She grants to us, as granted by her God—But, Angelo, than thine grey Time unfurl'd Never his fairy wing o'er fairer world!
Dim was its little disk, and angel eyes Alone could see the phantom in the skies, When first Al Aaraaf knew her course to be Headlong thitherward o'er the starry sea—But when its glory swell'd upon the sky, As glowing Beauty's bust beneath man's eye, We paus'd before the heritage of men, And thy star trembled—as doth Beauty then!"

Thus, in discourse, the lovers whiled away

The night that waned and waned and brought no
day.

They fell: for Heaven to them no hope imparts Who hear not for the beating of their hearts

TO THE RIVER—

AIR river! in thy bright, clear flow
Of crystal, wandering water,
Thou art an emblem of the glow
Of beauty—the unhidden heart—
The playful maziness of art
In old Alberto's daughter;

But when within thy wave she looks—Which glistens then, and trembles—Why, then, the prettiest of books—Her worshipper resembles;
For in his heart, as in thy stream,—Her image deeply lies—His heart which trembles at the beam—Of her soul-searching eyes.

TAMERLANE

IND solace in a dying hour!
Such, father, is not (now) my theme—
I will not madly deem that power
Of Earth may shrive me of the sin
Uncarthly pride hath revell'd in—
I have no time to dote or dream:
You call it hope—that fire of fire!
It is but agony of desire:
If I can hope—Oh God! I can—
Its fount is holier—more divine—
I would not call thee fool, old man,
But such is not a gift of thine.

Know thou the secret of a spirit
Bow'd from its wild pride into shame.
O yearning heart! I did inherit
Thy withering portion with the fame,
The searing glory which hath shone
Amid the Jewels of my throne,
Halo of Hell! and with a pain
Not Hell shall make me fear again—
O craving heart, for the lost flowers
And sunshine of my summer hours!
The undying voice of that dead time,
With its interminable chime,
Rings, in the spirit of a spell,
Upon thy emptiness—a knell.

I have not always been as now:
The fever'd diadem on my brow
I claim'd and won usurpingly—
Hath not the same fierce heirdom given
Rome to the Cæsar—this to me?
The heritage of a kingly mind,
And a proud spirit which hath striven
Triumphantly with human kind.

On mountain soil I first drew life:
The mists of the Taglay have shed
Nightly their dews upon my head,
And, I believe, the winged strife
And tumult of the headlong air
Have nestled in my very hair.

So late from Heaven—that dew—it fell
('Mid dreams of an unholy night)
Upon me with the touch of Hell,
While the red flashing of the light
From clouds that hung, like banners, o'er,
Appeared to my half-closing eye
The pageantry of monarchy,
And the deep trumpet-thunder's roar
Came hurriedly upon me, telling
Of human battle, where my voice,
My own voice, silly child!—was swelling
(O! how my spirit would rejoice,
And leap within me at the cry)

The battle-cry of Victory!
The rain came down upon my head
Unshelter'd—and the heavy wind
Rendered me mad and deaf and blind.
It was but man, I thought, who shed

Laurels upon me: and the rush—
The torrent of the chilly air
Gurgled within my ear the crush
Of empires—with the captive's prayer—
The hum of suitors—and the tone
Of flattery 'round a sovereign's throne.

My passions, from that hapless hour,
Usurp'd a tyranny which men
Have deem'd, since I have reached to power,
My innate nature—be it so:
But, father, there liv'd one who, then,
Then—in my boyhood—when their fire
Burn'd with a still intenser glow
(For passion must, with youth, expire)
E'en then who knew this iron heart
In woman's weakness had a part.

I have no words—alas!—to tell
The loveliness of loving well!
Nor would I now attempt to trace
The more than beauty of a face
Whose lineaments, upon my mind,
Are—shadows on th' unstable wind
Thus I remember having dwelt
Some page of early lore upon,
With loitering eye, till I have felt
The letters—with their meaning—melt
To fantasies—with none.

O, she was worthy of all love!

Love—as in infancy was mine—
'Twas such as angel minds above

Might envy; her young heart the shrine

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On which my every hope and thought
Were incense—then a goodly gift,
For they were childish and upright—
Pure—as her young example taught:
Why did I leave it, and, adrift,
Trust to the fire within, for light?

We grew in age—and love—together—Roaming the forest, and the wild;
My breast her shield in wintry weather—And, when the friendly sunshine smil'd, And she would mark the opening skies,
I saw no Heaven—but in her eyes.

Young Love's first lesson is—the heart:
For 'mid that sunshine, and those smiles,
When, from our little cares apart,
And laughing at her girlish wiles,
I'd throw me on her throbbing breast,
And pour my spirit out in tears—
There was no need to speak the rest—
No need to quiet any fears
Of her—who ask'd no reason why,
But turn'd on me her quiet eye!

Yet more than worthy of the love
My spirit struggled with, and strove,
When, on the mountain peak, alone,
Ambition lent it a new tone—
I had no being—but in thee:
The world, and all it did contain
In the earth—the air—the sea—
Its joy—its little lot of pain

That was new pleasure—the ideal,
Dim, vanities of dreams by night—
And dimmer nothings which were real—
(Shadows—and a more shadowy light!)
Parted upon their misty wings,
And, so, confusedly, became
Thine image and—a name—a name!
Two separate—yet most intimate things.

I was ambitious—have you known
The passion, father? You have not:
A cottager, I mark'd a throne
Of half the world as all my own,
And murmur'd at such lowly lot—
But, just like any other dream,
Upon the vapor of the dew
My own had past, did not the beam
Of beauty which did while it thro'
The minute—the hour—the day—oppress
My mind with double loveliness.

We walked together on the crown
Of a high mountain which look'd down
Afar from its proud natural towers
Of rock and forest, on the hills—
The dwindled hills! begirt with bowers
And shouting with a thousand rills.

I spoke to her of power and pride,
But mystically—in such guise
That she might deem it nought beside
The moment's converse; in her eyes
I read, perhaps too carelessly—

A mingled feeling with my own— The flush on her bright cheek, to me Seem'd to become a queenly throne Too well that I should let it be Light in the wilderness alone.

I wrapp'd myself in grandeur then
And donn'd a visionary crown—
Yet it was not that Fantasy
Had thrown her mantle over me—
But that, among the rabble—men,
Lion ambition is chain'd down—
And crouches to a keeper's hand—
Not so in deserts where the grand—
The wild—the terrible conspire
With their own breath to fan his fire.

Look 'round thee now on Samarcand!—
Is she not queen of Earth? her pride
Above all cities? in her hand
Their destinies? in all beside
Of glory which the world hath known
Stands she not nobly and alone?
Falling—her veriest stepping-stone
Shall form the pedestal of a throne—
And who her sovereign? Timour—he
Whom the astonished people saw
Striding o'er empires haughtily
A diadem'd outlaw!

O, human love! thou spirit given, On Earth, of all we hope in Heaven! Which fall'st into the soul like rain Upon the Siroc-withered plain, And, failing in thy power to bless, But leav'st the heart a wilderness! Idea! which bindest life around With music of so strange a sound And beauty of so wild a birth—Farewell! for I have won the Earth.

When Hope, the eagle that tower'd, could see No cliff beyond him in the sky,
His pinions were bent droopingly—
And homeward turn'd his soften'd eye.
'Twas sunset: when the sun will part
There comes a sullenness of heart
To him who still would look upon
The glory of the summer sun.
That soul will hate the ev'ning mist
So often lovely, and will list
To the sound of the coming darkness (known
To those whose spirits harken) as one
Who, in a dream of night, would fly
But cannot from a danger nigh.

What tho' the moon—the white moon
Shed all the splendor of her noon,
Her smile is chilly—and her beam,
In that time of dreariness, will seem
(So like you gather in your breath)
A portrait taken after death.
And boyhood is a summer sun
Whose waning is the dreariest one—
For all we live to know is known
And all we seek to keep hath flown—
Let life, then, as the day-flower, fall
With the noon-day beauty—which is all.

I reach'd my home—my home no more—For all had flown who made it so.

I pass'd from out its mossy door,
And, tho' my tread was soft and low,
A voice came from the threshold stone
Of one whom I had earlier known—
O, I defy thee, Hell, to show
On beds of fire that burn below,
An humbler heart—a deeper wo.

Father, I firmly do believe— I know—for Death who comes for me From regions of the blest afar, Where there is nothing to deceive, Hath left his iron gate ajar, And rays of truth you cannot see Are flashing thro' Eternity— I do believe that Eblis hath A snare in every human path— Else how, when in the holy grove I wandered of the idol, Love, Who daily scents his snowy wings With incense of burnt offerings From the most unpolluted things. Whose pleasant bowers are yet so riven Above with trellis'd rays from Heaven. No mote may shun—no tiniest fly— The light'ning of his eagle eye— How was it that Ambition crept, Unseen, amid the revels there. Till growing bold, he laughed and leapt In the tangles of Love's very hair?

TO ---

HE bowers whereat, in dreams, I see
The wantonest singing birds,
Are lips—and all thy melody
Of lip-begotten words—

Thine eyes, in Heaven of heart enshrinedThen desolately fall,O God! on my funereal mindLike starlight on a pall—

Thy heart—thy heart!—I wake and sigh, And sleep to dream till day
Of the truth that gold can never buy—
Of the baubles that it may.

A DREAM

N visions of the dark night
I have dreamed of joy departed—
But a waking dream of life and light
Hath left me broken-hearted.

Ah! what is not a dream by day
To him whose eyes are cast
On things around him with a ray
Turned back upon the past?

That holy dream—that holy dream, While all the world were chiding, Hath cheered me as a lovely beam A lonely spirit guiding.

What though that light, thro' storm and night,
So trembled from afar—
What could there be more purely bright
In Truth's day-star?

ROMANCE

OMANCE, who loves to nod and sing,
With drowsy head and folded wing,
Among the green leaves as they shake
Far down within some shadowy lake,
To me a painted paroquet
Hath been—a most familiar bird—
Taught me my alphabet to say—
To lisp my very earliest word
While in the wild wood I did lie,
A child—with a most knowing eye.

Of late, eternal Condor years
So shake the very Heaven on high
With tumult as they thunder by,
I have no time for idle cares
Through gazing on the unquiet sky.
And when an hour with calmer wings
Its down upon my spirit flings—
That little time with lyre and rhyme
To while away—forbidden things!
My heart would feel to be a crime
Unless it trembled with the strings.

FAIRY-LAND

IM vales—and shadowy floods— And cloudy-looking woods, Whose forms we can't discover For the tears that drip all over Huge moons there wax and wane— Again—again—again— Every moment of the night— Forever changing places— And they put out the star-light With the breath from their pale faces. About twelve by the moon-dial One more filmy than the rest (A kind which, upon trial, They have found to be the best) Comes down—still down—and down With its centre on the crown Of a mountain's eminence, While its wide circumference In easy drapery falls Over hamlets, over halls, Wherever they may be-O'er the strange woods—o'er the sea— Over spirits on the wing-Over every drowsy thing— And buries them up quite In a labyrinth of light— And then, how deep!—O, deep! Is the passion of their sleep. In the morning they arise, And their moony covering Is soaring in the skies,

With the tempests as they toss, Like—almost any thing—Or a yellow Albatross.
They use that moon no more For the same end as before—Videlicet a tent—Which I think extravagant: Its atomies, however, Into a shower dissever, Of which those butterflies, Of Earth, who seek the skies, And so come down again (Never-contented things!) Have brought a specimen Upon their quivering wings.

THE LAKE-TO-

N spring of youth it was my lot
To haunt of the wide world a spot
The which I could not love the less—
So lovely was the loneliness
Of a wild lake, with black rock bound,
And the tall pines that towered around.

But when the Night had thrown her pall Upon that spot, as upon all, And the mystic wind went by Murmuring in melody—
Then—ah then I would awake
To the terror of the lone lake.
Yet that terror was not fright,
But a tremulous delight—

A feeling not the jewelled mine Could teach or bribe me to define— Nor Love—although the Love were thine.

Death was in that poisonous wave, And in its gulf a fitting grave For him who thence could solace bring To his lone imagining— Whose solitary soul could make An Eden of that dim lake.

SONG

SAW thee on thy bridal day—When a burning blush came o'er thee, Though happiness around thee lay, The world all love before thee:

And in thine eye a kindling light (Whatever it might be)
Was all on Earth my aching sight
Of Loveliness could see.

That blush, perhaps, was maiden shame—
As such it well may pass—
Though its glow hath raised a fiercer flame
In the breast of him, alas!

Who saw thee on that bridal day,
When that deep blush would come o'er thee,
Though happiness around thee lay,
The world all love before thee.

TO M. L. S-

F all who hail thy presence as the morning-Of all to whom thine absence is the night— The blotting utterly from out high heaven The sacred sun—of all who, weeping, bless thee Hourly for hope—for life—ah! above all, For the resurrection of deep-buried faith In Truth—in Virtue—in Humanity— Of all who, on Despair's unhallowed bed Lying down to die, have suddenly arisen At thy soft-murmured words, "Let there be light!" At the soft-murmured words that were fulfilled In the seraphic glancing of thine eves— Of all who owe thee most—whose gratitude Nearest resembles worship—oh, remember The truest—the most fervently devoted, And think that these weak lines are written by him By him who, as he pens them, thrills to think His spirit is communing with an angel's.

DREAMS

H that my young life were a lasting dream. My spirit not awakening till the beam Of an eternity should bring the morrow! Yes, though that long dream were of hopeless sorrow, 'T were better than the cold reality Of waking life to him whose heart must be, And hath been still, upon the lovely earth, A chaos of deep passion from his birth. But should it be—that dream eternally Continuing, as dreams have been to me In my young boyhood—should it thus be given, 'T were folly still to hope for higher heaven. For I have revelled, when the sun was bright I' the summer sky, in dreams of living light And loveliness; have left my very heart In climes of mine imagining, apart From mine own home, with beings that have been Of mine own thought—what more could I have seen? 'T was once, and only once, and the wild hour From my remembrance shall not pass—some power Or spell had bound me-'t was the chilly wind Came o'er me in the night and left behind Its image on my spirit, or the moon Shone on my slumbers in her lofty noon Too coldly, or the stars—howe'er it was, That dream was as that night-wind-let it pass.

I have been happy, though [but] in a dream.

I have been happy, and I love the theme;
Dreams! in their vivid coloring of life,
As in that fleeting, shadowy, misty strife
Of semblance with reality which brings
To the delirious eye more lovely things
Of paradise and love—and all our own!—
Than young Hope in his sunniest hour hath known.

SPIRITS OF THE DEAD

HY soul shall find itself alone
'Mid dark thoughts of the gray tombstone;
Not one of all the crowd, to pry
Into thine hour of secrecy.

Be silent in that solitude
Which is not loneliness, for then
The spirits of the dead who stood
In life before thee are again
In death around thee, and their will
Shall overshadow thee; be still.

The night, though clear, shall frown,
And the stars shall not look down
From their high thrones in heaven
With light like hope to mortals given;
But their red orbs, without beam,
To thy weariness shall seem
As a burning and a fever
Which would cling to thee forever.
Now are thoughts thou shalt not banish;
Now are visions ne'er to vanish;
From thy spirit shall they pass
No more, like dew-drops from the grass.

The breeze, the breath of God, is still, And the mist upon the hill Shadowy, shadowy, yet unbroken, Is a symbol and a token; How it hangs upon the trees, A mystery of mysteries!

EVENING STAR

WAS noontide of summer And mid-time of night: And stars, in their orbits, Shone pale through the light Of the brighter cold moon, 'Mid planets her slaves, Herself in the heavens. Her beam on the waves. I gazed awhile On her cold smile. Too cold, too cold for me: There passed, as a shroud, A fleecy cloud, And I turned away to thee, Proud evening star, In thy glory afar, And dearer thy beam shall be; For joy to my heart Is the proud part Thou bearest in heaven at night, And more I admire Thy distant fire Than that colder, lowly light.

"IN YOUTH HAVE I KNOWN ONE WITH WHOM THE EARTH"

Now often we forget all time, when lone Admiring Nature's universal throne; Her woods, her wilds, her mountains, the intense Reply of hers to our intelligence!

Ι

In secret communing held, as he with it,
In daylight and in beauty from his birth;
Whose fervid, flickering torch of life was lit
From the sun and stars, whence he had drawn forth
A passionate light—such for his spirit was fit;
And yet that spirit knew not, in the hour
Of its own fervor, what had o'er it power.

2

Perhaps it may be that my mind is wrought
To a fever by the moonbeam that hangs o'er,
But I will half believe that wild light fraught
With more of sovereignty than ancient lore
Hath ever told; or is it of a thought
The unembodied essence and no more,
That with a quickening spell doth o'er us pass
As dew of the night-time o'er the summer grass?

3

Doth o'er us pass, when, as the expanding eye
To the loved object, so the tear to the lid
Will start, which lately slept in apathy.
And yet it need not be—that object—hid

From us in life, but common—which doth lie
Each hour before us—but then only bid
With a strange sound, as of a harp-string broken,
To awake us. 'T is a symbol and a token.

4

Of what in other worlds shall be, and given
In beauty by our God to those alone
Who otherwise would fall from life and heaven,
Drawn by their heart's passion, and that tone,
That high tone of the spirit which hath striven
Though not with faith, with godliness, whose throne
With desperate energy 't hath beaten down;
Wearing its own deep feeling as a crown.

"THE HAPPIEST DAY, THE HAPPIEST HOUR"

HE happiest day, the happiest hour
My seared and blighted heart hath known,
The highest hope of pride and power,
I feel hath flown.

Of power, said I? Yes, such I ween; But they have vanished long, alas! The visions of my youth have been— But let them pass.

And pride, what have I now with thee?
Another brow may even inherit
The venom thou hast poured on me;
Be still, my spirit!

The happiest day, the happiest hour
Mine eyes shall see—have ever seen,
The brightest glance of pride and power,
I feel have been;
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But were that hope of pride and power Now offered with the pain Even then I felt, that brightest hour I would not live again.

For on its wing was dark alloy, And, as it fluttered, fell An essence powerful to destroy A soul that knew it well.

ALONE

ROM childhood's hour I have not been As others were; I have not seen As others saw; I could not bring My passions from a common spring. From the same source I have not taken My sorrow; I could not awaken My heart to joy at the same tone; And all I loved, I loved alone. Then, in my childhood, in the dawn Of a most stormy life, was drawn From every depth of good and ill The mystery which binds me still: From the torrent or the fountain: From the red cliff of the mountain: From the sun that round me rolled In its autumn tint of gold; From the lightning in the sky As it passed me flying by; From the thunder and the storm; And the cloud that took the form (When the rest of heaven was blue) Of a demon in my view.

EUREKA

AN ESSAY ON

THE MATERIAL AND SPIRITUAL UNIVERSE

[To the few who love me and whom I love—to those who feel rather than to those who think—to the dreamers and those who put faith in dreams as in the only realities—I offer this Book of Truths, not in its character of Truth-Teller, but for the Beauty that abounds in its Truth; constituting it true. To these I present the composition as an Art-Product alone:—let us say as a Romance; or, if I be not urging too lofty a claim, as a Poem.

What I here propound is true:—therefore it cannot die:—or, if by any means it be now trodden down so that it die,

it will "rise again to the Life Everlasting."

Nevertheless it is a Poem only that I wish this work to be judged after I am dead.]

T is with humility really unassumed—it is with a sentiment even of awe—that I pen the opening sentence of this work: for of all conceivable subjects I approach the reader with the most solemn—the most comprehensive—the most difficult—the most august.

What terms shall I find sufficiently simple in their sublimity—sufficiently sublime in their simplicity

-for the mere enunciation of my theme?

I design to speak of the Physical, Metaphysical and Mathematical—of the Material and Spiritual Universe:—of its Essence, its Origin, its Creation, its Present Condition and its Destiny. I shall be so rash, moreover, as to challenge the conclusions, and thus, in effect, to question the sagacity, of many of the greatest and most justly reverenced of men.

In the beginning, let me as distinctly as possible announce—not the theorem which I hope to demonstrate—for, whatever the mathematicans may assert, there is, in this world at least, no such thing as demonstration—but the ruling idea which, throughout this volume, I shall be continually endeavoring to suggest.

My general proposition, then, is this:—In the Original Unity of the First Thing lies the Secondary Cause of All Things, with the Germ of their Inevitable Anni-

hilation.

In illustration of this idea, I propose to take such a survey of the Universe that the mind may be able really to receive and to perceive an individual

impression.

He who from the top of Ætna casts his eyes leisurely around is affected chiefly by the extent and diversity of the scene. Only by a rapid whirling on his heel could he hope to comprehend the panorama in the sublimity of its oneness. But as, on the summit of Ætna, no man has thought of whirling on his heel, so no man has ever taken into his brain the full uniqueness of the prospect; and so, again, whatever considerations lie involved in this uniqueness, have as yet no practical existence for mankind.

I do not know a treatise in which a survey of the Universe—using the word in its most comprehensive and only legitimate acceptation—is taken at all:—and it may be as well here to mention that by the term "Universe," wherever employed without qualification in this essay, I mean to designate the utmost conceivable expanse of space, with all things, spiritual and material, that can be imagined to exist within the compass of that expanse.

In speaking of what is ordinarily implied by the expression, "Universe," I shall take a phrase of

limitation—"the Universe of stars." Why this distinction is considered necessary, will be seen in the sequel.

But even of treatises on the really limited, although always assumed as the unlimited, Universe of stars, I know none in which a survey, even of this limited Universe, is so taken as to warrant deductions from its individuality. The nearest approach to such a work is made in the "Cosmos" of Alexander Von Humboldt. He presents the subject, however, not in its individuality but in its generality. His theme, in its last result, is the law of each portion of the merely physical Universe, as this law is related to the laws of every other portion of this merely physical Universe. His design is simply synceretical. In a word, he discusses the universality of material relation, and discloses to the eye of Philosophy whatever inferences have hitherto lain hidden behind this universality. But however admirable be the succinctness with which he has treated each particular point of his topic, the mere multiplicity of these points occasions, necessarily, an amount of detail, and thus an involution of idea, which preclude all individuality of impression.

It seems to me that, in aiming at this latter effect, and, through it, at the consequences—the conclusions—the suggestions—the speculations—or if nothing better offer itself, the mere guesses which may result from it—we require something like a mental gyration on the heel. We need so rapid a revolution of all things about the central point of sight that, while the minutiæ vanish altogether, even the more conspicuous objects become blended into one. Among the vanishing minutiæ, in a survey of this kind, would be all exclusively terrestrial matters. The Earth would be considered

in its planetary relations alone. A man, in this view, becomes mankind; mankind a member of the

cosmical family of Intelligences.

And now, before proceeding to our subject proper, let me beg the reader's attention to an extract or two from a somewhat remarkable letter, which appears to have been found corked in a bottle and floating on the *Mare Tenebrarum*—an ocean well described by the Nubian geographer, Ptolemy, Hephestion but little frequented in modern days unless by the Transcendentalists and some other divers for crotchets. The date of this letter, I confess, surprises me even more particularly than its contents; for it seems to have been written in the year *two* thousand eight hundred and. forty-eight. As for the passages I am about to transcribe, they, I fancy, will speak for themselves.

"Do you know, my dear friend," says the writer, addressing, no doubt, a contemporary—"Do you know that it is scarcely more than eight or nine hundred years ago since the metaphysicians first consented to relieve the people of the singular fancy that there exist but two practicable roads to Truth? Believe it if you can! It appears, however, that long, long ago, in the night of Time, there lived a Turkish philosopher called Aries and surnamed Tottle." [Here, possibly, the letter-writer means Aristotle; the best names are wretchedly corrupted in two or three thousand years.] "The fame of this great man depended mainly upon his demonstration that sneezing is a natural provision, by means of which over-profound thinkers are enabled to expel superfluous ideas through the nose; but he obtained a scarcely less valuable celebrity as the founder, or at all events as the principal propagator, of what was termed the deductive or à priori philosophy. He started with what he maintained to be axioms, or self-evident truths:-

and the now well-understood fact that no truths are self-evident, really does not make in the slightest degree against his speculations:—it was sufficient for his purpose that the truths in question were evident at all. From axioms he proceeded, logically, to results. His most illustrious disciples were one Tuclid, a geometrician," [meaning Euclid] "and one Kant, a Dutchman, the originator of that species of Transcendentalism which, with the change merely

of a C for a K, now bears his peculiar name.

"Well, Aries Tottle flourished supreme, until the advent of one Hog, surnamed 'the Ettrick shepherd,' who preached an entirely different system, which he called the à posteriori or inductive. plan referred altogether to sensation. He proceeded by observing, analyzing, and classifying facts -instantiæ Naturæ, as they were somewhat affectedly called—and arranging them into general laws. In a word, while the mode of Aries rested on noumena. that of Hog depended on phenomena; and so great was the admiration excited by this latter system that, at its first introduction, Aries fell into general disrepute. Finally, however, he recovered ground, and was permitted to divide the empire of Philosophy with his more modern rival:—the savans contenting themselves with proscribing all other competitors, past, present, and to come; putting an end to all controversy on the topic by the promulgation of a Median law, to the effect that the Aristotelian and Baconian roads are, and of right ought to be, the sole possible avenues to knowledge:- 'Baconian,' you must know, my dear friend," adds the letter-writer at this point, "was an adjective invented as equivalent to Hog-ian, and at the same time more dignified and euphonious.

"Now I do assure you most positively"-proceeds

the epistle—"that I represent these matters fairly; and you can easily understand how restrictions so absurd on their very face must have operated, in those days, to retard the progress of true Science, which makes its most important advances—as all History will show—by seemingly intuitive leaps. These ancient ideas confined investigation to crawling: and I need not suggest to you that crawling, among varieties of locomotion, is a very capital thing of its kind;—but because the tortoise is sure of foot, for this reason must we clip the wings of the eagles? For many centuries, so great was the infatuation, about Hog especially, that a virtual stop was put to all thinking, properly so called. No man dared utter a truth for which he felt himself indebted to his soul alone. It mattered not whether the truth was even demonstrably such; for the dogmatizing philosophers of that epoch regarded only the road by which it professed to have been attained. The end, with them, was a point of no moment, whatever:- 'the means!' they vociferated-'let us look at the means!'—and if, on scrutiny of the means, it was found to come neither under the category Hog. nor under the category Aries (which means ram), why then the savans went no farther, but, calling the thinker a fool and branding him a 'theorist,' would never, thenceforward, have any thing to do either with him or with his truths.

"Now, my dear friend," continues the letterwriter, "it cannot be maintained that by the crawling system exclusively adopted, men would arrive at the maximum amount of truth, even in any long series of ages; for the repression of imagination was an evil not to be counterbalanced even by absolute certainty in the snail processes. But their certainty was very far from absolute. The error of our

progenitors was quite analogous with that of the wiseacre who fancies he must necessarily see an object the more distinctly, the more closely he holds it to his eyes. They blinded themselves, too. with the impalpable, titillating Scotch snuff of detail; and thus the boasted facts of the Hog-ites were by no means always facts—a point of little importance but for the assumption that they always were. The vital taint, however, in Baconianism-its most lamentable fount of error—lay in its tendency to throw power and consideration into the hands of merely perceptive men-of those inter-Tritonic minnows, the microscopical savans—the diggers and pedlers of minute facts, for the most part in physical science—facts, all of which they retailed at the same price upon the highway; their value depending, it was supposed, simply upon the fact of their fact, without reference to their applicability or inapplicability in the development of those ultimate and only legitmate facts, called Law.

"Than the persons"—the letter goes on to say— "than the persons thus suddenly elevated by the Hog-ian philosophy into a station for which they were unfitted—thus transferred from the sculleries into the parlors of Science—from its pantries into its pulpits—than these individuals a more intolerant a more intolerable set of bigots and tyrants never existed on the face of the earth. Their creed, their text, and their sermon were, alike, the one word 'fact'-but, for the most part, even of this one word, they knew not even the meaning. On those who ventured to disturb their facts with the view of putting them in order and to use, the disciples of Hog had no mercy whatever. All attempts at generalization were met at once by the words 'theoretical, 'theory,' 'theorist'—all thought, to be brief,

was very properly resented as a personal affront to themselves. Cultivating the natural sciences to the exclusion of Metaphysics, the Mathematics, and Logic, many of these Bacon-engendered philosophers—one-idead, one-sided, and lame of a leg—were more wretchedly helpless—more miserably ignorant, in view of all the comprehensible objects of knowledge, than the veriest unlettered hind who proves that he knows something at least, in admitting that he

knows absolutely nothing.

"Nor had our forefathers any better right to talk about certainty, when pursuing, in blind confidence, the à priori path of axioms, or of the Ram. innumerable points this path was scarcely as straight as a ram's-horn. The simple truth is, that the Aristotelians erected their castles upon a basis far less reliable than air; for no such things as axioms ever existed or can possibly exist at all. This they must have been very blind indeed not to see, or at least to suspect; for, even in their own day, many of their long-admitted 'axioms' had been abandoned: 'ex nihilo nihil fit,' for example, and a 'thing cannot act where it is not,' and 'there cannot be antipodes, and 'darkness cannot proceed from light.' These and numerous similar propositions formerly accepted, without hesitation, as axioms, or undeniable truths, were, even at the period of which I speak, seen to be altogether untenable:—how absurd in these people, then, to persist in relying upon a basis, as immutable, whose mutability had become so repeatedly manifest!

"But, even through evidence afforded by themselves against themselves, it is easy to convict these à priori reasoners of the grossest unreason—it is easy to show the futility—the impalpability of their axioms in general. I have now lying before me"—

it will be observed that we still proceed with the letter—''I have now lying before me a book printed about a thousand years ago. Pundit assures me that it is decidedly the cleverest ancient work on its topic, which is 'Logic.' The author, who was much esteemed in his day, was one Miller, or Mill; and we find it recorded of him, as a point of some importance, that he rode a mill-horse whom he called Jeremy Bentham:—but let us glance at the volume itself.

"Ah!—'Ability or inability to conceive,' says Mr. Mill, very properly, 'is in no case to be received as a criterion of axiomatic truth.' Now, that this is a palpable truism, no one in his senses will deny. Not to admit the proposition, is to insinuate a charge of variability in Truth itself, whose very title is a synonym of the Steadfast. If ability to conceive be taken as a criterion of Truth, then a truth to David Hume would very seldom be a truth to Ioe: and ninety-nine hundredths of what is undeniable in Heaven, would be demonstrable falsity upon Earth. The proposition of Mr. Mill, then, is sustained. I will not grant it to be an axiom; and this merely because I am showing that no axioms exist; but, with a distinction which could not have been cavilled at even by Mr. Mill himself, I am ready to grant that, if an axiom there be, then the proposition of which we speak has the fullest right to be considered an axiom—that no more absolute axiom is—and, consequently, that any subsequent proposition which shall conflict with this one primarily advanced, must be either a falsity in itself—that is to say, no axiom-or, if admitted axiomatic, must at once neutralize both itself and its predecessor.

"And now, by the logic of their own propounder, let us proceed to test any one of the axioms propounded. Let us give Mr. Mill the fairest of play.

We will bring the point to no ordinary issue. We will select for investigation no common-place axiom —no axiom of what, not the less preposterously because only impliedly, he terms his secondary class —as if a positive truth by definition could be either more or less positively a truth: we will select, I say, no axiom of an unquestionability so questionable as is to be found in Euclid. We will not talk, for example, about such propositions as that two straight lines cannot enclose a space, or that the whole is greater than any one of its parts. We will afford the logician every advantage. We will come at once to a proposition which he regards as the acme of the unquestionable—as the quintessence of axiomatic undeniability. Here it is:- 'Contradictions cannot both be true—that is, cannot coexist in nature.' Here Mr. Mill means, for instance,—and I give the most forcible instance conceivable,—that a tree must be either a tree or not a tree—that it cannot be at the same time a tree and not a tree: all which is quite reasonable of itself, and will answer remarkably well as an axiom, until we bring it into collation with an axiom insisted upon a few pages before; in other words—words which I have previously employed—until we test it by the logic of its own propounder. 'A tree,' Mr. Mill asserts, must be either a tree or not a tree.' Very well: and now let me ask him, why. To this little query there is but one response—I defy any man living to invent a second. The sole answer is this:—'Because we find it impossible to conceive that a tree can be anything else than a tree or not a tree.' This, I repeat, is Mr. Mill's sole answer—he will not pretend to suggest another; and yet, by his own showing, his answer is clearly no answer at all-for has he not already required us to admit, as an axiom, that

ability or inability to conceive, is in no case to be taken as a criterion of axiomatic truth? Thus allabsolutely all his argumentation is at sea without a rudder. Let it not be urged that an exception from the general rule is to be made, in cases where the 'impossibility to conceive' is so peculiarly great as when we are called upon to conceive a tree both a tree and not a tree. Let no attempt, I say, be made at urging this sotticism; for, in the first place, there are no degrees of 'impossibility,' and thus no one impossible conception can be more peculiarly impossible than another impossible conception: in the second place, Mr. Mill himself-no doubt after thorough deliberation—has most distinctly, and most rationally, excluded all opportunity for exception, by the emphasis of his proposition, that, in no case, is ability or inability to conceive, to be taken as a criterion of axiomatic truth: in the third place, even were exceptions admissible at all, it remains to be shown how any exception is admissible here. That a tree can be both a tree and not a tree, is an idea which the angels, or the devils, may entertain, and which no doubt many an earthly Bedlamite, or Trancendentalist, does.

"Now I do not quarrel with these ancients," continues the letter-writer, "so much on account of the transparent frivolity of their logic—which, to be plain, was baseless, worthless, and fantastic altogether—as on account of their pompous and infatuate proscription of all other roads to Truth than the two narrow and crooked paths—the one of creeping and the other of crawling—to which, in their ignorant perversity, they have dared to confine the Soul—the Soul which loves nothing so well as to soar in those regions of illimitable intuition which are utterly incognizant of 'path'.'

"By the by, my dear friend, is it not an evidence of the mental slavery entailed upon those bigoted people by their Hogs and Rams, that in spite of the eternal prating of their savans about roads to Truth, none of them fell, even by accident, into what we now so distinctly perceive to be the broadest, the straightest, and most available of all mere roads—the great thoroughfare—the majestic highway of the Consistent? Is it not wonderful that they should have failed to deduce from the works of God the vitally momentous consideration that a perfect consistency can be nothing but an absolute truth? How plain-how rapid our progress since the late announcement of this proposition! By its means, investigation has been taken out of the hands of the ground-moles, and given as a duty. rather than as a task, to the true—to the only true thinkers—to the generally-educated men of ardent imagination. These latter—our Keplers—our Laplaces—'speculate'—'theorize'—these are the terms can you not fancy the shout of scorn with which they would be received by our progenitors, were it possible for them to be looking over my shoulders as I write? The Keplers, I repeat, speculate theorize—and their theories are merely corrected reduced-sifted-cleared, little by little, of their chaff of inconsistency—until at length there stands apparent an unencumbered Consistency—a consistency which the most stolid admit—because it is a consistency—to be an absolute and unquestionable Truth.

"I have often thought, my friend, that it must have puzzled these dogmaticians of a thousand years ago, to determine, even, by which of their two boasted roads it is that the cryptographist attains the solution of the more complicated cyphers-or by which of them Champollion guided mankind to those important and innumerable truths which, for so many centuries, have lain entombed amid the phonetical hieroglyphics of Egypt. In especial, would it not have given these bigots some trouble to determine by which of their two roads was reached the most momentous and sublime of all their truths -the truth-the fact of gravitation? Newton deduced it from the laws of Kepler. Kepler admitted that these laws he guessed—these laws whose investigation disclosed to the greatest of British astronomers that principle, the basis of all (existing) physical principle, in going behind which we enter at once the nebulous kingdom of Metaphysics. Yes!—these vital laws Kepler guessed—that is to say, he imagined them. Had he been asked to point out either the deductive or inductive route by which he attained them, his reply might have been -'I know nothing about routes-but I do know the machinery of the Universe. Here it is. I grasped it with my soul—I reached it through mere dint of intuition. Alas, poor ignorant old man! Could not any metaphysician have told him that what he called 'intuition' was but the conviction resulting from deductions or inductions of which the processes were so shadowy as to have escaped his consciousness, eluded his reason, or bidden defiance to his capacity of expression? How great a pity it is that some 'moral philosopher' had not enlightened him about all this! How it would have comforted him on his death-bed to know that, instead of having gone intuitively and thus unbecomingly, he had, in fact, proceeded decorously and legitimately-that is to say Hog-ishly, or at least Ram-ishly-into the vast halls where lay gleaming, untended, and hitherto untouched by

mortal hand-unseen by mortal eye-the imperishable and priceless secrets of the Universe! "Yes, Kepler was essentially a theorist; but this title, now of so much sanctity, was, in those ancient days, a designation of supreme contempt. It is only now that men begin to appreciate that divine old man-to sympathise with the prophetical and poetical rhapsody of his ever memorable words. For my part," continues the unknown correspondent, "I glow with a sacred fire when I even think of them, and feel that I shall never grow weary of their repetition:—in concluding this letter, let me have the real pleasure of transcribing them once again:-'I care not whether my work be read now or by posterity. I can afford to wait a century for readers when God himself has waited six thousand years for an observer. I triumph. I have stolen the golden secret of the Egyptians. I will indulge my sacred fury."

Here end my quotations from this very unaccountable and, perhaps, somewhat impertinent epistle; and perhaps it would be folly to comment, in any respect, upon the chimerical, not to say revolutionary, fancies of the writer—whoever he is—fancies so radically at war with the well-considered and well-settled opinions of this age. Let us proceed

then, to our legitimate thesis, The Universe.

This thesis admits a choice between two modes of discussion:—We may ascend or descend. Beginning at our own point of view, at the Earth on which we stand, we may pass to the other planets of our system, thence to the Sun, thence to our system considered collectively, and thence, through other systems, indefinitely outwards; or, commencing on high at some point as definite as we can make it or conceive it, we may come down to the

habitation of Man. Usually, that is to say, in ordinary essays on Astronomy, the first of these two modes is, with certain reservation, adopted: this for the obvious reason that astronomical facts. merely, and principles, being the object, that object is best fulfilled in stepping from the known because proximate, gradually onward to the point where all certitude becomes lost in the remote. For my present purpose, however, that of enabling the mind to take in, as if from afar and at one glance, a distant conception of the individual Universe—it is clear that a descent to small from great—to the outskirts from the centre (if we could establish a centre)—to the end from the beginning (if we could fancy a beginning) would be the preferable course, but for the difficulty, if not impossibility, of presenting, in this course, to the unastronomical, a picture at all comprehensible in regard to such considerations as are involved in quantity—that is to say, in number, magnitude and distance.

Now, distinctness—intelligibility, at all points, is a primary feature in my general design. On important topics it is better to be a good deal prolix than even a very little obscure. But abstruseness is a quality appertaining to no subject *per se*. All are alike, in facility of comprehension, to him who approaches them by properly graduated steps. It is merely because a stepping-stone, here and there, is heedlessly left unsupplied in our road to Differential Calculus, that this latter is not altogether as simple a thing as a sonnet by Mr. Solomon Seesaw.

By way of admitting, then, no *chance* for misapprehension, I think it advisable to proceed as if even the more obvious facts of Astronomy were unknown to the reader. In combining the two modes of discussion to which I have referred, I

propose to avail myself of the advantages peculiar to each—and very especially of the *iteration in detail* which will be unavoidable as a consequence of the plan. Commencing with a descent, I shall reserve for the return upwards those indispensable considerations of *quantity* to which allusion has already been made.

Let us begin, then, at once, with that merest of words, "Infinity." This, like "God," "spirit," and some other expressions of which the equivalents exist in all languages, is by no means the expression of an idea, but of an effort at one. It stands for the possible attempt at an impossible conception. Man needed a term by which to point out the direction of this effort—the cloud behind which lay, forever invisible, the object of this attempt. A word, in fine, was demanded, by means of which one human being might put himself in relation at once with another human being and with a certain tendency of the human intellect. Out of this demand arose the word, "Infinity;" which is thus the representative but of the thought of a thought.

As regards that infinity now considered—the infinity of space—we often hear it said that "its idea is admitted by the mind—is acquiesced in—is entertained—on account of the greater difficulty which attends the conception of a limit." But this is merely one of those phrases by which even profound thinkers, time out of mind, have occasionally taken pleasure in deceiving themselves. The quibble lies concealed in the word "difficulty." "The mind," we are told, "entertains the idea of limitless, through the greater difficulty which it finds in entertaining that of limited, space." Now, were the proposition but fairly put, its absurdity would become transparent at once. Clearly, there is

no mere difficulty in the case. The assertion intended, if presented according to its intention, and without sophistry, would run thus:—"The mind admits the idea of limitless, through the greater impossibility of entertaining that of limited, space."

It must be immediately seen that this is not a question of two statements between whose respective credibilities—or of two arguments between whose respective validities—the reason is called upon to decide:—it is a matter of two conceptions, directly conflicting, and each avowedly impossible, one of which the intellect is supposed to be capable of entertaining, on account of the greater impossibility of entertaining the other. The choice is not made between two difficulties; it is merely fancied to be made between two impossibilities. Now of the former, there are degrees, but of the latter, none:just as our impertinent letter-writer has already suggested. A task may be more or less difficult; but it is either possible or not possible—there are no gradations. It might be more difficult to overthrow the Andes than an ant-hill; but it can be no more impossible to annihilate the matter of the one than the matter of the other. A man may jump ten feet with less difficulty than he can jump twenty, but the impossibility of his leaping to the moon is not a wit less than that of his leaping to the dog-star.

Since all this is undeniable: since the choice of mind is to be made between *impossibilities* of conception: since one impossibility cannot be greater than another: and since, thus, one cannot be preferred to another: the philosophers who not only maintain, on the grounds mentioned, man's *idea* of infinity but, on account of such suppositious idea, *infinity itself*—are plainly engaged in demonstrating one impossible thing to be possible by showing how

it is that some one other thing—is impossible too. This, it will be said, is nonsense, and perhaps it is; indeed I think it very capital nonsense, but forego all claim to it as nonsense of mine.

The readiest mode, however, of displaying the fallacy of the philosophical argument on this question, is by simply adverting to a fact respecting it which has been hitherto quite overlooked—the fact that the argument alluded to both proves and disproves its own proposition. "The mind is impelled," say the theologians and others, "to admit a First Cause, by the superior difficulty it experiences in conceiving cause beyond cause without end." The quibble, as before, lies in the word "difficulty," but here what is it employed to sustain? A First Cause. And what is a First Cause? An ultimate termination of causes. And what is an ultimate termination of causes? Finity—the Finite. Thus the one quibble, in two processes, by God knows how many philosophers, is made to support now Finity and now Infinity; could it not be brought to support something besides? As for the quibbles, they, at least, are insupportable. But, to dismiss them; what they prove in the one case is the identical nothing which they demonstrate in the other.

Of course, no one will suppose that I here contend for the absolute impossibility of *that* which we attempt to convey in the word "Infinity." My purpose is but to show the folly of endeavoring to prove Infinity itself, or even our conception of it, by any such blundering ratiocination as that which is ordinarily employed.

Nevertheless, as an individual, I may be permitted to say that I cannot conceive Infinity, and am convinced that no human being can. A mind not thoroughly self-conscious, not accustomed to the

introspective analysis of its own operations, will, it is true, often deceive itself by supposing that it has entertained the conception of which we speak. In the effort to entertain it, we proceed step beyond step, we fancy point still beyond point; and so long as we continue the effort, it may be said, in fact, that we are tending to the formation of the idea designed; while the strength of the impression that we actually form or have formed, is in the ratio of the period during which we keep up the mental endeavor. But it is in the act of discontinuing the endeavor—of fulfilling (as we think) the idea—of putting the finishing stroke (as we suppose) to the conception—that we overthrow at once the whole fabric of our fancy by resting upon some one ultimate, and, therefore, definite point. This fact, however, we fail to perceive, on account of the absolute coincidence, in time, between the settling down upon the ultimate point and the act of cessation in thinking. In attempting, on the other hand, to frame the idea of a limited space, we merely converse the processes which involve the impossibility.

We believe in a God. We may or may not believe in finite or in infinite space; but our belief, in such cases, is more properly designated as faith, and is a matter quite distinct from that belief proper—from that intellectual belief—which presupposes the men-

tal conception.

The fact is, that, upon the enunciation of any one of that class of terms to which "Infinity" belongs—the class representing thoughts of thought—he who has a right to say that he thinks at all, feels himself called upon, not to entertain a conception, but simply to direct his mental vision toward some given point, in the intellectual firmament, where lies a nebula never to be resolved. To solve it, indeed, he makes no effort;

for with a rapid instinct he comprehends, not only the impossibility, but, as regards all human purposes, the inessentiality of its solution. He perceives that the Deity has not designed it to be solved. He sees, at once, that it lies out of the brain of man, and even how, if not exactly why, it lies out of it. There are people, I am aware, who, busying themselves in attempts at the unattainable, acquire very easily, by dint of the jargon they emit, among those thinkers-that-they-think with whom darkness and depth are synonymous, a kind of cuttle-fish reputation for profundity; but the finest quality of Thought is its self-cognizance; and with some little equivocation, it may be said that no fog of the mind can well be greater than that which, extending to the very boundaries of the mental domain, shuts out even these boundaries themselves from comprehension.

It will now be understood that, in using the phrase, "Infinity of Space," I make no call upon the reader to entertain the impossible conception of an absolute infinity. I refer simply to the "utmost conceivable expanse" of space—a shadowy and fluctuating domain, now shrinking, now swelling, in accordance with the vacillating energies of the imagination.

Hitherto, the Universe of stars has always been considered as coincident with the Universe proper, as I have defined it in the commencement of this Discourse. It has been always either directly or indirectly assumed—at least since the dawn of intelligible Astronomy—that, were it possible for us to attain any given point in space, we should still find, on all sides of us, an interminable succession of stars. This was the untenable idea of Pascal when making perhaps the most successful attempt ever made, at periphrasing the conception for which we struggle

in the word "Universe." "It is a sphere," he says, "of which the center is everywhere, the circumference, nowhere." But although his intended definition is, in fact, no definition of the Universe of stars, we may accept it, with some mental reservation, as a definition (rigorous enough for all practical purposes) of the Universe proper—that is to say, of the Universe of space. This latter, then, let us regard as "a sphere of which the centre is everywhere, the circumference nowhere." In fact, while we find it impossible to fancy an end to space, we have no difficulty in picturing to ourselves any one of an infinity of beginnings.

As our starting point, then, let us adopt the Godhead. Of this Godhead, in itself, he alone is not imbecile—he alone is not impious who propounds—nothing. "Nous ne connaissons rien," says the Baron de Bielfeld—"Nous ne connaissons rien de la nature ou de l'essence de Dieu:—pour savior ce qu'il est, il faut être Dieu même."—"We know absolutely nothing of the nature or essence of God:—in order to comprehend what he is, we should have to be God ourselves."

"We should have to be God ourselves!"—With a phrase so startling as this yet ringing in my ears, I nevertheless venture to demand if this our present ignorance of the Deity is an ignorance to which the soul is everlastingly condemned.

By Him, however—now, at least, the Incomprehensible—by Him—assuming him as a Spirit—that is to say, as not Matter—a distinction which, for all intelligible purposes, will stand well instead of a definition—by Him, then, existing as Spirit, let us content ourselves, to-night, with supposing to have been created, or made out of Nothing, by dint of his Volition—at some point of Space which we will take as a centre—at some period into which we do not

pretend to inquire, but at all events immensely remote—by Him, then again, let us suppose to have been created—what? This is a vitally momentous epoch in our considerations. What is it that we are justified—that alone we are justified in supposing to

have been, primarily and solely, created?

We have attained a point where only Intuition can aid us:—but now let me recur to the idea which I have already suggested as that alone which we can properly entertain of intuition. It is but the conviction arising from those inductions or deductions of which the processes are so shadowy as to escape our consciousness, elude our reason, or defy our capacity of expression. With this understanding, I now assert—that an intuition altogether irresistible, although inexpressible, forces me to the conclusion that what God originally created—that that Matter which, by dint of his Volition, he first made from his Spirit, or from Nihility, could have been nothing but Matter in its utmost conceivable state of—what?—of Simplicity?

This will be found the sole absolute assumption of my Discourse. I use the word "assumption" in its ordinary sense; yet I maintain that even this my primary proposition, is very, very far indeed, from being really a mere assumption. Nothing was ever more certainly—no human conclusion was ever, in fact, more regularly—more rigorously deduced:—but, alas! the processes lie out of the human analysis—at all events are beyond the utterance of the

human tongue.

Let us now endeavor to conceive what Matter must be, when, or if, in its absolute extreme of *Simplicity*. Here the Reason flies at once to Imparticularity—to a particle—to *one* particle—a particle of *one* kind of *one* character—of *one* nature—of *one size*—of one form—a particle, therefore, "without form and void"—a particle positively a particle at all points—a particle absolutely unique, individual, undivided, and not indivisible only because He who created it, by dint of his Will, can by an infinitely less energetic exercise of the same Will, as a matter of course, divide it.

Oneness, then, is all that I predicate of the originally created Matter; but I propose to show that this Oneness is a principle abundantly sufficient to account for the constitution, the existing phænomena and the plainly inevitable annihilation of at least the material Universe.

The willing into being the primordial particle, has completed the act, or more properly the conception of Creation. We now proceed to the ultimate purpose for which we are to suppose the Particle created—that is to say, the ultimate purpose so far as our considerations yet enable us to see it—the constitution of the Universe from it, the Particle.

This constitution has been effected by forcing the originally and therefore normally One into the abnormal condition of Many. An action of this character implies reaction. A diffusion from Unity, under the conditions, involves a tendency to return into Unity—a tendency ineradicable until satisfied. But on these points I will speak more fully hereafter.

The assumption of absolute Unity in the primordial Particle includes that of infinite divisibility. Let us conceive the Particle, then, to be only not totally exhausted by diffusion into Space. From the one Particle, as a centre, let us suppose to be irradiated spherically—in all directions—to immeasurable but still definite distances in the previously vacant space—a certain inexpressibly great yet

limited number of unimaginably yet not infinitely minute atoms.

Now, of these atoms, thus diffused, or upon diffusion, what conditions are we permitted—not to assume, but to infer, from consideration as well of their source as of the character of the design apparent in their diffusion? Unity being their source, and difference from Unity the character of the design manifested in their diffusion, we are warranted in supposing this character to be at least generally preserved throughout the design, and to form a portion of the design itself:—that is to say, we shall be warranted in conceiving continual differences at all points from the uniquity and simplicity of the origin. But, for these reasons, shall we be justified in imagining the atoms heterogeneous, dissimilar, unequal, and inequidistant? More explicitly—are we to consider no two atoms as, at their diffusion, of the same nature, or of the same form, or of the same size?-and, after fulfilment of their diffusion into Space, is absolute inequidistance, each from each, to be understood of all of them? In such arrangement, under such conditions, we most easily and immediately comprehend the subsequent most feasible carrying out to completion of any such design as that which I have suggested—the design of variety out of unity-diversity out of sameness-heterogeneity out of homogeneity-complexity out of simplicity—in a word, the utmost possible multiplicity of relation out of the emphatically irrelative One. Undoubtedly, therefore, we should be warranted in assuming all that has been mentioned. but for the reflection, first, that supererogation is not presumable of any Divine Act; and, secondly, that the object supposed in view, appears as feasible when some of the conditions in question are dispensed

with, in the beginning, as when all are understood immediately to exist. I mean to say that some are involved in the rest, or so instantaneous a consequence of them as to make the distinction inappreciable. Difference of size, for example, will at once be brought about through the tendency of one atom to a second, in preference to a third, on account of particular inequidistance; which is to be comprehended as particular inequidistances between centres of quantity, in neighboring atoms of different form-a matter not at all interfering with the generallyequable distribution of the atoms. Difference of kind, too, is easily conceived to be merely a result of differences in size and form, taken more or less conjointly:—in fact, since the Unity of the Particle Proper implies absolute homogeneity, we cannot imagine the atoms, at their diffusion, differing in kind, without imagining, at the same time, a special exercise of the Divine Will, at the emission of each atom, for the purpose of effecting, in each, a change of its essential nature:—so fantastic an idea is the less to be indulged, as the object proposed is seen to be thoroughly attainable without such minute and elaborate interposition. We perceive, therefore, upon the whole, that it would be supererogatory, and consequently unphilosophical, to predicate of the atoms, in view of their purposes, any thing more than difference of form at their dispersion, with particular inequidistance after it—all other differences arising at once out of these, in the very first processes of massconstitution:-We thus establish the Universe on a purely geometrical basis. Of course, it is by no means necessary to assume absolute difference, even of form, among all the atoms irradiated—any more than absolute particular inequidistance of each from each. We are required to conceive merely that no

neighboring atoms are of similar form—no atoms which can ever approximate, until their inevitable reunition at the end.

Although the immediate and perpetual tendency of the disunited atoms to return into their normal Unity, is implied, as I have said, in their abnormal diffusion, still it is clear that this tendency will be without consequence—a tendency and no more—until the diffusive energy, in ceasing to be exerted, shall leave it, the tendency, free to seek its satisfaction. The Divine Act, however, being considered as determinate, and discontinued on fulfilment of the diffusion, we understand, at once, a reaction—in other words, a satisfiable tendency of the disunited atoms to return into One.

But the diffusive energy being withdrawn, and the reaction having commenced in furtherance of the ultimate design—that of the utmost possible Relation—this design is now in danger of being frustrated, in detail, by reason of that very tendency to return which is to effect its accomplishment in general. Multiplicity is the object; but there is nothing to prevent proximate atoms from lapsing at once, through the now satisfiable tendency—before the fulfilment of any ends proposed in multiplicity—into absolute oneness among themselves:—there is nothing to impede the aggregation of various unique masses, at various points of space:—in other words, nothing to interfere with the accumulation of various masses, each absolutely One.

For the effectual and thorough completion of the general design, we thus see the necessity for a repulsion of limited capacity—a separative something which, on withdrawal of the diffusive Volition, shall at the same time allow the approach, and forbid the junction, of the atoms; suffering them infinitely

to approximate, while denying them positive contact: in a word, having the power-up to a certain epochof preventing their coalition, but no ability to interfere with their coalescence in any respect or degree. The repulsion, already considered as so peculiarly limited in other regards, must be understood, let me repeat, as having power to prevent absolute coalition, only up to a certain epoch. Unless we are to conceive that the appetite for Unity among the atoms is doomed to be satisfied never; -unless we are to conceive that what had a beginning is to have no end—a conception which cannot really be entertained, however much we may talk or dream of entertaining it-we are forced to conclude that the repulsive influence imagined, will, finally-under pressure of the Unitendency collectively applied, but never and in no degree until, on fulfilment of the Divine purposes, such collective application shall be naturally made vield to a force which, at that ultimate epoch, shall be the superior force precisely to the extent required, and thus permit the universal subsidence into the inevitable, because original and therefore normal, Onc. The conditions here to be reconciled are difficult indeed:-we cannot even comprehend the possibility of their conciliation;—nevertheless, the apparent impossibility is brilliantly suggestive.

That the repulsive something actually exists, we see. Man neither employs, nor knows, a force sufficient to bring two atoms into contact. This is but the well-established proposition of the impenetrability of matter. All Experiment proves—all Philosophy admits it. The design of the repulsion—the necessity for its existence—I have endeavored to show; but from all attempt at investigating its nature have religiously abstained; this on account of an intuitive conviction that the principle at issue

is strictly spiritual—lies in a recess impervious to our present understanding—lies involved in a consideration of what now—in our human state—is not to be considered—in a consideration of Spirit in itself. I feel, in a word, that here the God has interposed, and here only, because here and here only the knot demanded the interposition of the God.

In fact, while the tendency of the diffused atoms to return into Unity, will be recognized, at once, as the principle of the Newtonian Gravity, what I have spoken of as a repulsive influence prescribing limits to the (immediate) satisfaction of the tendency will be understood as *that* which we have been in the practice of designating now as heat, now as magnetism, now as *electricity*; displaying our ignorance of its awful character in the vacillation of the phraseology with which we endeavor to circumscribe it.

Calling it, merely for the moment, electricity, we know that all experimental analysis of electricity has given, as an ultimate result, the principle, or seeming principle, heterogeneity. Only where things differ, is electricity apparent; and it is presumable that they never differ where it is not developed at least, if not apparent. Now, this result is in the fullest keeping with that which I have reached unempirically. The design of the repulsive influence I have maintained to be that of preventing immediate Unity among the diffused atoms; and these atoms are represented as different each from each. Difference is their character—their essentiality—just as no-difference was the essentiality of their course. When we say, then, that an attempt to bring any two of these atoms together would induce an effort. on the part of the repulsive influence, to prevent the contact, we may as well use the strictly convertible sentence that an attempt to bring together any two differences will result in a development of electricity. All existing bodies, of course, are composed of these atoms in proximate contact, and are therefore to be considered as mere assemblages of more or fewer differences; and the resistance made by the repulsive spirit, on bringing together any two such assemblages, would be in the ratio of the two sums of the differences in each:—an expression which, when reduced, is equivalent to this:-The amount of electricity developed on the approximation of two bodies, is proportional to the difference between the respective sums of the atoms of which the bodies are composed. That no two bodies are absolutely alike, is a simple corollary from all that has been here said. Electricity, therefore, existing always, is developed whenever any bodies, but manifested only when bodies of appreciable difference, are brought into approximation.

To electricity—so, for the present, continuing to call it—we may not be wrong in referring the various physical appearances of light, heat and magnetism; but far less shall we be liable to err in attributing to this strictly spiritual principle the more important phænomena of vitality, consciousness and Thought. On this topic, however, I need pause here merely to suggest that these phænomena, whether observed generally or in detail, seem to proceed at

least in the ratio of the heterogeneous.

Discarding now the two equivocal terms, "gravitation" and "electricity," let us adopt the more definite expressions, "attraction" and "repulsion." The former is the body; the latter the soul: the one is the material; the other the spiritual, principle of the Universe. No other principles exist. All phæ-

nomena are referable to one, or to the other, or to both combined. So rigorously in this the case—so thoroughly demonstrable is it that attraction and repulsion are the *sole* properties through which we perceive the Universe—in other words, by which Matter is manifested to Mind—that, for all merely argumentative purposes, we are fully justified in assuming that matter *exists* only as attraction and repulsion—that attraction and repulsion *are* matter:—there being no conceivable case in which we may not employ the term "matter" and the terms "attraction" and "repulsion," taken together, as equivalent, and therefore convertible, expressions

in Logic.

I said, just now, that what I have described as the tendency of the diffused atoms to return into their original unity, would be understood as the principle of the Newtonian law of gravity; and, in fact, there can be but little difficulty in such an understanding, if we look at the Newtonian gravity in a merely general view, as a force impelling matter to seek matter; that is to say, when we pay no attention to the known modus operandi of the Newtonian force. The general coincidence satisfies us; but, upon looking closely, we see, in detail, much that appears incoincident, and much in regard to which no coincidence, at least, is established. For example: the Newtonian gravity, when we think of it in certain moods, does not seem to be a tendency to oneness at all, but rather a tendency of all bodies in all directions—a phrase apparently expressive of a tendency to diffusion. Here, then, is an incoincidence. Again; when we reflect on the mathematical law governing the Newtonian tendency, we see clearly that no coincidence has been made good, in respect of the modus operandi, at least, between gravitation as known to exist and that seemingly simple and direct tendency which I have assumed.

In fact, I have attained a point at which it will be advisable to strengthen my position by reversing my processes. So far, we have gone on à priori, from an abstract consideration of Simplicity, as that quality most likely to have characterized the original action of God. Let us now see whether the established facts of the Newtonian Gravitation may not afford us,

à posteriori, some legitimate inductions.

What does the Newtonian law declare? That all bodies attract each other with forces proportional to the squares of their distances. Purposely, I have given, in the first place, the vulgar version of the law; and I confess that in this, as in most other vulgar versions of great truths, we find little of a suggestive character. Let us now adopt a more philosophical phraseology:—Every atom, of every body, attracts every other atom, both of its own and of every other body, with a force which varies inversely as the squares of the distances between the attracting and attracted atom. Here, indeed, a flood of suggestion bursts upon the mind.

But let us see distinctly what it was that Newton proved—according to the grossly irrational definitions of proof prescribed by the metaphysical schools. He was forced to content himself with showing how thoroughly the motions of an imaginary Universe, composed of attracting and attracted atoms obedient to the law he announced, coincide with those of the actually existing Universe so far as it comes under our observation. This was the amount of his demonstration—that is to say, this was the amount of it, according to the conventional cant of the "philosophies." His successes added proof multiplied by proof—such proof as a sound

intellect admits—but the demonstration of the law itself, persist the metaphysicians, had not been strengthened in any degree. "Ocular, physical proof," however, of attraction, here upon Earth, in accordance with the Newtonian theory, was, at length, much to the satisfaction of some intellectual grovellers, afforded. This proof arose collaterally and incidentally (as nearly all important truths have arisen) out of an attempt to ascertain the mean density of the Earth. In the famous Maskelyne, Cavendish and Bailly experiments for this purpose, the attraction of the mass of a mountain was seen, felt, measured, and found to be mathematically consistent with the immortal theory of the British astronomer.

But in spite of this confirmation of that which needed none—in spite of the so-called corroboration of the "theory" by the so-called "ocular and physical proof"—in spite of the *character* of this corroboration—the ideas which even really philosophical men cannot help imbibing of gravity—and, especially, the ideas of it which ordinary men get and contentedly maintain, are *seen* to have been derived, for the most part, from a consideration of the principle as they find it developed—*merely in the planet upon which they stand*.

Now, to what does so partial a consideration tend—to what species of error does it give rise? On the Earth we see and feel, only that gravity impels all bodies towards the centre of the Earth. No man in the common walks of life could be made to see or feel anything else—could be made to perceive that anything, anywhere, has a perpetual, gravitating tendency in any other direction than to the centre of the Earth; yet (with an exception hereafter to be specified) it is a fact that every earthly

thing (not to speak now of every heavenly thing) has a tendency not *only* to the Earth's centre but in every conceivable direction besides.

Now, although the philosophic cannot be said to err with the vulgar in this matter, they nevertheless permit themselves to be influenced, without knowing it, by the sentiment of the vulgar idea. "Although the Pagan fables are not believed," says Bryant, in his very erudite "Mythology," yet we forget ourselves continually and make inferences from them as from existing realities." I mean to assert that the merely sensitive perception of gravity as we experience it on Earth, beguiles mankind into the fancy of concentralization or especiality respecting it—has been continually biasing towards this fancy even the mightiest intellects—perpetually, although imperceptibly, leading them away from the real characteristics of the principle; thus preventing them, up to this date, from ever getting a glimpse of that vital truth which lies in a diametrically opposite direction—behind the principle's essential characteristics—those, not of concentralization or especiality -but of universality and diffusion. This "vital truth" is Unity as the source of the phænomenon.

Let me now repeat the definition of gravity:— Every atom, of every body, attracts every other atom, both of its own and of every other body, with a force which varies inversely as the squares of the distances of the attracting and attracted atom.

Here let the reader pause with me, for a moment, in contemplation of the miraculous—of the ineffable—of the altogether unimaginable complexity of relation involved in the fact that each atom attracts every other atom—involved merely in this fact of the attraction, without reference to the law or mode in which the attraction is manifested—involved

merely in the fact that each atom attracts every other atom at all, in a wilderness of atoms so numerous that those which go to the composition of a cannon-ball, exceed, probably, in mere point of number, all the stars which go to the constitution of the Universe.

Had we discovered, simply, that each atom tended to some one favorite point—to some especially attractive atom—we should still have fallen upon a discovery which, in itself, would have sufficed to overwhelm the mind:-but what is it that we are actually called upon to comprehend? That each atom attracts—sympathizes with the most delicate movements of every other atom, and with each and with all at the same time, and forever, and according to a determinate law of which the complexity, even considered by itself solely, is utterly beyond the grasp of the imagination of man. If I propose to ascertain the influence of one mote in a sunbeam upon its neighboring mote, I cannot accomplish my purpose without first counting and weighing all the atoms in the Universe, and defining the precise positions of all at one particular moment. If I venture to displace, by even the billionth part of an inch, the microscopical speck of dust which lies now upon the point of my finger, what is the character of that act upon which I have adventured? I have done a deed which shakes the Moon in her path, which causes the Sun to be no longer the sun. and which alters forever the destiny of the multitudinous myriads of stars that roll and glow in the majestic presence of their Creator.

These ideas—conceptions such as these—unthoughtlike thoughts—soul-reveries rather than conclusions or even considerations of the intellect:—ideas, I repeat, such as these, are such as we can

alone hope profitably to ascertain in any effort at

grasping the great principle, Attraction.

But now, with such ideas—with such a vision of the marvellous complexity of Attraction fairly in his mind—let any person competent of thought on such topics as these, set himself to the task of imagining a principle for the phænomena observed—a condition from which they sprang.

Does not so evident a brotherhood among the atoms point to a common parentage? Does not a sympathy so omniprevalent, so ineradicable, and so thoroughly irrespective, suggest a common paternity as its source? Does not one extreme impel the reason to the other? Does not the infinitude of division refer to the utterness of individuality? Does not the entireness of the complex hint at the perfection of the simple? It is not that the atoms, as we see them, are divided or that they are complex in their relations—but that they are inconceivably divided and unutterably complex: it is the extremeness of the conditions to which I now allude, rather than to the conditions themselves. In a word, is it not because the atoms were, at some remote epoch of time, even more than together—is it not because originally, and therefore normally, they were One that now, in all circumstances—at all points—in all directions—by all modes of approach—in all relations and through all conditions—they struggle back to this absolutely, this irrelatively, this unconditionally one?

Some person may here demand:—"Why—since it is to the *One* that the atoms struggle back—do we not find and define Attraction 'a merely general tendency to a center?"—why, in especial, do not your atoms—the atoms which you describe as having been irradiated from a centre—proceed at once,

rectilinearly back to the central point of their

origin?"

I reply that they do; as will be distinctly shown; but that the cause of their so doing is quite irrespective of the centre as such. They all tend rectilinearly towards a centre, because of the sphericity with which they have been irradiated into space. Each atom, forming one of a generally uniform globe of atoms, finds more atoms in the direction of the centre, of course, than in any other, and in that direction, therefore, is impelled—but is not thus impelled because the centre is the point of its origin. It is not to any point that the atoms are allied. It is not any locality, either in the concrete or in the abstract, to which I suppose them bound. Nothing like location was conceived as their origin. Their source lies in the principle, Unity. This is their lost parent. This they seek always-immediately—in all directions—wherever it is even partially to be found; thus appeasing, in some measure, the ineradicable tendency, while on the way to its absolute satisfaction in the end. It follows from all this, that any principle which shall be adequate to account for the law, or modus operandi, of the attractive force in general, will account for this law in particular:-that is to say, any principle which will show why the atoms should tend to their general centre of irradiation with forces inversely proportional to the squares of the distances will be admitted as satisfactorily accounting, at the same time, for the tendency according to the same law. of these atoms each to each;—for the tendency to the centre is merely the tendency each to each. and not any tendency to a centre as such.—Thus it will be seen, also, that the establishment of my propositions would involve no necessity of modifica-

tion in the terms of the Newtonian definition of Gravity, which declares that each atom attracts each other atom and so forth, and declares this merely: but (always under the supposition that what I propose be, in the end, admitted) it seems clear that some error might occasionally be avoided, in the future processes of Science, were a more ample phraseology adopted:-for instance:-"Each atom tends to every other atom, &c., with a force, &c.: the general result being a tendency of all, with a similar force, to a general centre."

The reversal of our processes has thus brought us to an identical result; but while in the one process intuition was the starting point, in the other it was the goal. In commencing the former journey I could only say that, with an irresistible intuition, I felt Simplicity to have been made the characteristic of the original action of God:-in ending the letter I can only declare that with an irresistible intuition. I perceive Unity to have been the source of the observed phænomena of the Newtonian gravitation. Thus, according to the schools, I prove nothing. So be it:-I design but to suggest-and to convince through the suggestion. I am proudly aware that there exist many of the most profound and cautiously discriminative human intellects which cannot help being abundantly content with my-suggestions. To these intellects—as to my own—there is no mathematical demonstration which could bring the least additional true proof of the great Truth which I have advanced—the truth of Original Unity as the source—as the principle of the Universal Phænomena. For my part I am not sure that I speak and see-I am not so sure that my heart beats and that my soul lives:—of the rising of to-morrow's sun—a probability that as yet lies in the Future—I do not pretend to

be one thousandth part as sure—as I am of the irretrievably bygone *Fact* that All Things and All Thoughts of Things, with all their ineffable Multiplicity of Relation, sprang at once into being from the primordial and irrelative *One*.

Referring to the Newtonian Gravity, Dr. Nichol, the eloquent author of "The Architecture of the Heavens," says:—"In truth we have no reason to suppose this great Law, as now revealed, to be the ultimate or simplest, and therefore the universal and all-comprehensive, form of a great Ordinance. The mode in which its intensity diminishes with the element of distance, has not the aspect of an ultimate principle; which always assumes the simplicity and self-evidence of those axioms which constitute the basis of Geometry."

Now, it is quite true that "ultimate principles," in the common understanding of the words, always assume the simplicity of geometrical axioms—(as for "self-evidence," there is no such thing)—but these principles are clearly not "ultimate;" in other terms, what we are in the habit of calling principles are no principles, properly speaking—since there can be but one principle, the Volition of God. We have no right to assume, then, from what we observe in rules that we choose foolishly to name "principles," anything at all in respect to the characteristics of a principle proper. The "ultimate principles" of which Dr. Nichol speaks as having geometrical simplicity, may and do have this geometrical turn. as being part and parcel of a vast geometrical system, and thus a system of simplicity itself—in which, nevertheless, the truly ultimate principle is. as we know, the consummation of the complexthat is to say, of the unintelligible—for is it not the Spiritual Capacity of God?

I quoted Dr. Nichol's remark, however, not so much to question its philosophy, as by way of calling attention to the fact that while all men have admitted some principle as existing behind the law of Gravity, no attempt has been yet made to point out what this principle in particular is:-if we except, perhaps, occasional fantastic efforts at referring it to Magnetism, or Mesmerism, or Swedenborgianism, or Transcendentalism, or some other equally delicious ism of the same species, and invariably patronized by one and the same species of people. The great mind of Newton, while boldly grasping the Law itself, shrank from the principle of the Law. The more fluent and comprehensive at least, if not the more patient and profound, sagacity of Laplace, had not the courage to attack it. But hesitation on the part of these two astronomers it is, perhaps, not so very difficult to understand. They, as well as all the first class of mathematicians, were mathematicians solely:—their intellect at least had a firmly-pronounced mathematico-physical tone. What lay not distinctly within the domain of Physics, or of Mathematics, seemed to them either Non-Entity or Shadow. Nevertheless, we may well wonder that Leibnitz, who was a marked exception to the general rule in these respects, and whose mental temperament was a singular admixture of the mathematical with the physico-metaphysical, did not at once investigate and establish the point at issue. Either Newton or Laplace, seeking a principle and discovering none physical, would have rested contentedly in the conclusion that there was absolutely none; but it is almost impossible to fancy of Liebnitz, that, having exhausted in his search the physical dominions, he would not have stepped at once, boldly and hopefully, amid his old familiar

haunts in the kingdom of Metaphysics. Here, indeed, it is clear that he *must* have adventured in search of the treasure:—that he did not find it after all, was, perhaps, because his fairy guide, Imagination, was not sufficiently well-grown, or well-educated, to direct him aright.

I observed, just now, that, in fact, there had been certain vague attempts at referring Gravity to some very uncertain isms. These attempts, however, although considered bold, and justly so considered, looked no farther than to the generality—the merest generality—of the Newtonian Law. Its modus operandi has never, to my knowledge, been approached in the way of an effort at explanation. It is therefore, with no unwarranted fear of being taken for a madman at the outset, and before I can bring my propositions fairly to the eye of those who alone are competent to decide upon them, that I here declare the modus operandi of the Law of Gravity to be an exceedingly simple and perfectly explicable thing—that is to say, when we make our advances towards it in just gradations and in the true direction—when we regard it from the proper point of view.

Whether we reach the idea of absolute *Unity* as the source of All Things, from a consideration of Simplicity as the most probable characteristic of the original action of God;—whether we arrive at it from an inspection of the universality of relation in the gravitating phænomena;—or whether we attain it as a result of the mutual corroboration afforded by both processes;—still, the idea itself, if entertained at all, is entertained in inseparable connection with another idea—that of the condition of the Universe of stars as we *now* perceive it—that is to say, a condition of immeasurable *diffusion* through space.

Now a connection between these two ideas—unity and diffusion—cannot be established unless through the entertainment of a third idea—that of *irradiation*. Absolute Unity being taken as a centre, then the existing Universe of stars is the result of *irradiation* from that centre.

Now, the laws of irradiation are known. They are part and parcel of the sphere. They belong to the class of indisputable geometrical properties. We say of them, "they are true—they are evident." To demand why they are true, would be to demand why the axioms are true upon which their demonstration is based. Nothing is demonstrable, strictly speaking; but if anything be, then the properties—the laws in question are demonstrated.

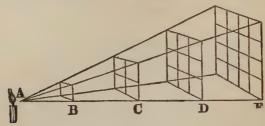
But these laws—what do they declare? Irradiation—how—by what steps does it proceed outwardly from a centre?

From a luminous centre, Light issues by irradiation; and the quantities of light received upon any given plane, supposed to be shifting its position so as to be now nearer the centre and now further from it, will be diminished in the same proportion as the squares of the distances of the plane from the luminous body, are increased; and will be increased in the same proportion as these squares are diminished.

The expression of the law may be thus generalized:—the number of light-particles (or, if the phrase be preferred, the number of light-impressions) received upon the shifting plane, will be *inversely* proportional with the squares of the distances of the plane. Generalizing yet again, we may say that the diffusion—the scattering—the irradiation, in a word—is *directly* proportional with the squares of the distances.

For example: at the distance B, from the luminous

centre A, a certain number of particles are so diffused as to occupy the surface B. Then at double the distance—that is to say, at C—they will be so much farther diffused as to occupy four such surfaces:



—at treble the distance, or at D, they will be so much farther separated as to occupy nine such surfaces;—while, at quadruple the distance, or at E, they will have become so scattered as to spread themselves over sixteen such surfaces—and so on forever.

In saying, generally, that the irradiation proceeds in direct proportion with the squares of the distances, we use the term irradiation to express the degree of the diffusion as we proceed outwardly from the centre. Conversing the idea, and employing the word "concentralization," to express the degree of the drawing together as we come back toward the centre from an outward position, we may say that concentralization proceeds inversely as the squares of the distances. In other words, we have reached the conclusion that, on the hypothesis that matter was originally irradiated from a centre, and is now returning to it, the concentralization, in the return, proceeds exactly as we know the force of gravitation to proceed.

Now here, if we could be permitted to assume that concentralization exactly represented the *force of the tendency to the centre*—that the one was exactly proportional to the other, and that the two proceeded together—we should have shown all that is required.

The sole difficulty existing, then, is to establish a direct proportion between "concentralization" and the *force* of concentralization; and this is done, of course, if we establish such proportion between "irradiation" and the *force* of irradiation.

A very slight inspection of the Heavens assures us that the stars have a certain general uniformity, equability, or equidistance, of distribution through that region of space in which, collectively, and in a roughly globular form, they are situated:—this species of very general, rather than absolute, equability, being in full keeping with my deduction of inequidistance, within certain limits, among the originally diffused atoms, as a corollary from the evident design of infinite complexity of relation out of irrelation. I started, it will be remembered, with the idea of a generally uniform but particularly ununiform distribution of the atoms;—an idea, I repeat, which an inspection of the stars, as they exist, confirms.

But even in the merely general equability of distribution, as regards the atoms, there appears a difficulty which, no doubt, has already suggested itself to those among my readers who have borne in mind that I suppose this equability of distribution effected through *irradiation from a centre*. The very first glance at the idea, irradiation, forces us to the entertainment of the hitherto unseparated and seemingly inseparable idea of agglomeration about a centre, with dispersion as we recede from it—the idea, in a word, of *inequability* of distribution in respect to the matter irradiated.

Now, I have elsewhere* observed, that it is by just such difficulties as the one now in question—such roughnesses—such peculiarities—such protuberances above the plane of the ordinary—that

^{*&}quot;Murders in the Rue Morgue"-p. 23, Vol. II.

Reason feels her way, if at all, in her search for the True. By the difficulty—the "peculiarity"—now presented, I leap at once to the secret—a secret which I might never have attained but for the peculiarity and the inferences which, in its mere character of

peculiarity, it affords me.

The process of thought, at this point, may be thus roughly sketched: -I say to myself-"Unity, as I have explained it, is a truth—I feel it. Diffusion is a truth—I see it. Irradiation, by which alone these two truths are reconciled, is a consequent truth-I perceive it. Equability of diffusion, first deduced à priori and then corroborated by the inspection of phænomena, is also a truth-I fully admit it. So far all is clear around me:-there are no clouds behind which the secret—the great secret of the gravitating modus operandi—can possibly lie hidden;-but this secret lies hereabouts, most assuredly; and were there but a cloud in view, I should be driven to suspicion of that cloud." And now, just as I say this, there actually comes a cloud into view. This cloud is the seeming impossibility of reconciling my truth, irradiation, with my truth, equability of diffusion. I say now:—"Behind this seeming impossibility is to be found what I desire." I do not say "real impossibility;" for invincible faith in my truths assures me that it is a mere difficulty after all; but I go on to say, with unflinching confidence, that, when this difficulty shall be solved, we shall find, wrapped up in the process of solution, the key to the secret at which we aim. Moreover— I feel that we shall discover but one possible solution of the difficulty; this for the reason that, were there two, one would be supererogatory—would be fruitless -would be empty-would contain no key-since no duplicate key can be needed to any secret of Nature.

And now, let us see: -Our usual notions of irradiation-in fact, all our distinct notions of it-are caught merely from the process as we see it exemplified in Light. Here there is a continuous outpouring of ray-streams, and with a force which we have at least no right to suppose varies at all. Now. in any such irradiation as this-continuous and of unvarying force—the regions nearer the centre must inevitably be always more crowded with the irradiated matter than the regions more remote. But I have assumed no such irradiation as this. I assumed no continuous irradiation; and for the simple reason that such an assumption would have involved, first, the necessity of entertaining a conception which I have shown no man can entertain. and which (as I will more fully explain hereafter) all observation of the firmament refutes—the conception of the absolute infinity of the Universe of stars—and would have involved, secondly, the impossibility of understanding a reaction—that is, gravitation—as existing now—since, while an act is continued, no reaction, of course, can take place. My assumption, then, or rather my inevitable deduction from just premises,—was that of a determinate irradiation—one finally discontinued.

Let me now describe the sole possible mode in which it is conceivable that matter could have been diffused through space, so as to fulfil the conditions at once of irradiation and of generally equable distribution.

For convenience of illustration, let us imagine, in the first place, a hollow sphere of glass, or of anything else, occupying the space throughout which the universal matter is to be thus equally diffused, by means of irradiation, from the absolute, irrelative, unconditional particle, placed in the centre of the sphere.

Now, a certain exertion of the diffusive power (presumed to be the Divine Volition)—in other words, a certain force—whose measure is the quantity of matter—that is to say, the number of atoms—emitted; emits, by irradiation, this certain number of atoms; forcing them in all directions outwardly from the centre—their proximity to each other diminishing as they proceed—until, finally, they are distributed, loosely, over the interior surface of the sphere.

When these atoms have attained this position, or while proceeding to attain it, a second and inferior exercise of the same force—or a second and inferior force of the same character—emits, in the same manner—that is to say, by irradiation as before—a second stratum of atoms which proceeds to deposit itself upon the first; the number of atoms, in this case as in the former, being of course the measure of the force which emitted them; in other words, the force being precisely adapted to the purpose it effects—the force, and the number of atoms sent out by the force, being directly proportional.

When this second stratum has reached its destined position—or while approaching it—a third still inferior exertion of the force, or a third inferior force of a similar character—the number of atoms emitted being in all cases the measure of the force—proceeds to deposit a third stratum upon the second:—and so on, until these concentric strata, growing gradually less and less, come down at length to the central point; and the diffusive matter, simultaneously with the diffusive force, is exhausted.

We have now the sphere filled, through means of irradiation, with atoms equably diffused. The two necessary conditions—those of irradiation and of equable diffusion—are satisfied; and by the *sole* process in which the possibility of their simultaneous

satisfaction is conceivable. For this reason, I confidently expect to find, lurking in the present condition of the atoms as distributed throughout the sphere, the secret of which I am in search—the all-important principle of the *modus operandi* of the Newtonian law. Let us examine, then, the actual condition of the atoms.

They lie in a series of concentric strata. They are equably diffused throughout the sphere. They have been irradiated into these states.

The atoms being *equably* distributed, the greater the superficial extent of any of these concentric strata, or spheres, the more atoms will lie upon it. In other words, the number of atoms lying upon the surface of any one of the concentric spheres, is directly proportional with the extent of that surface.

But, in any series of concentric spheres, the surfaces are directly proportional with the squares of the distances from the centre.*

Therefore the number of atoms in any stratum is directly proportional with the square of that stratum's distance from the centre.

But the number of atoms in any stratum is the measure of the force which emitted that stratum—that is to say, is *directly proportional* with the force.

Therefore the force which irradiated any stratum is directly proportional with the square of that stratum's distance from the centre:—or, generally,

The force of the irradiation has been directly proportional with the squares of the distances.

Now, Reaction, as far as we know any thing of it, is Action conversed. The general principle of Gravity being, in the first place, understood as the reaction of an act—as the expression of a desire on

^{*}Succinctly—The surfaces of spheres are as the squares of their radii.

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the part of Matter, while existing in a state of diffusion, to return into the Unity whence it was diffused; and, in the second place, the mind being called upon to determine the character of the desire the manner in which it would, naturally, be manifested; in other words, being called upon to conceive a probable law, or modus operandi, for the return; could not well help arriving at the conclusion that this law of return would be precisely the converse of the law of departure. That such would be the case, any one, at least, would be abundantly justified in taking for granted, until such time as some person should suggest something like a plausible reason why it should not be the case—until such period as a law of return shall be imagined which the intellect can consider as preferable.

Matter, then, irradiated into space with a force varying as the squares of the distances, might à priori, be supposed to return towards its centre of irradiation with a force varying inversely as the squares of the distances: and I have already shown* that any principle which will explain why the atoms should tend, according to any law, to the general centre, must be admitted as satisfactorily explaining, at the same time, why, according to the same law, they should tend each to each. For, in fact, the tendency to the general centre is not to a centre as such, but because of its being a point in tending towards which each atom tends most directly to its real and essential centre, Unity—the absolute and final Union of all.

The consideration here involved presents to my own mind no embarrassment whatever—but this fact does not blind me to the possibility of its being obscure to those who may have been less in the

^{*} Page 277, Vol. I.

habit of dealing with abstractions:—and, upon the whole, it may be as well to look at the matter from one or two other points of view.

The absolute, irrelative particle primarily created by the Volition of God, must have been in a condition of positive normality, or rightfulness—for wrongfulness implies relation. Right is positive: wrong is negative—is merely the negation of right; as cold is the negation of heat—darkness of light. That a thing may be wrong, it is necessary that there be some other thing in relation to which it is wrong—some condition which it fails to satisfy; some law which it violates; some being whom it aggrieves. If there be no such being, law, or condition, in respect to which the thing is wrong—and, still more especially, if no beings, laws, or conditions exist at all—then the thing cannot be wrong, and consequently must be right. Any deviation from normality involves a tendency to return to it. A difference from the normal-from the right-from the just—can be understood as effected only by the overcoming a difficulty; and if the force which overcomes the difficulty be not infinitely continued, the ineradicable tendency to return will at length be permitted to act for its own satisfaction. Upon withdrawal of the force, the tendency acts. is the principle of reaction as the inevitable consequence of finite action. Employing a phraseology of which the seeming affectation will be pardoned for its expressiveness, we may say that Reaction is the return from the condition of as it is and ought not to be into the condition of as it was, originally, and therefore ought to be: - and let me add here that the absolute force of Reaction would no doubt be always found in direct proportion with the realitythe truth—the absoluteness—of the originalityif ever it were possible to measure this latter:—and, consequently, the greatest of all conceivable reactions must be that produced by the tendency which we now discuss—the tendency to return into the absolutely original—into the supremely primitive. Gravity, then, must be the strongest of forces—an idea reached à priori and abundantly confirmed by induction. What use I make of the idea, will be seen in the sequel.

The atoms, now, having been diffused from their normal condition of Unity, seek to return towhat? Not to any particular point, certainly; for it is clear that if, upon the diffusion, the whole Universe of matter had been projected, collectively, to a distance from the point of irradiation, the atomic tendency to the general centre of the sphere would not have been disturbed in the least:-the atoms would not have sought the point in absolute space from which they were originally impelled. It is merely the condition, and not the point or locality at which this condition took its rise, that these atoms seek to re-establish; -- it is merely that condition which is their normality, that they desire. "But they seek a centre," it will be said, "and a centre is a point." True; but they seek this point not in its character of point—(for, were the whole sphere moved from its position, they would seek, equally, the centre; and the centre then would be a new point) -but because it so happens, on account of the form in which they collectively exist—(that of the sphere)—that only through the point in question the sphere's centre—they can attain their true object, Unity. In the direction of the centre each atom perceives more atoms than in any other direction. Each atom is impelled towards the centre because along the straight line joining it and the centre and passing on to the circumference

beyond, there lie a greater number of atoms than along any other straight line—a greater number of objects that seek it, the individual atom-a greater number of tendencies to Unity—a greater number of satisfactions for its own tendency to Unity—in a word, because in the direction of the centre lies the utmost possibility of satisfaction. generally, for its own individual appetite. To be brief, the condition, Unity, is all that is really sought; and if the atoms seem to seek the centre of the sphere, it is only impliedly, through implication because such centre happens to imply, to include, or to involve, the only essential centre, Unity. But on account of this implication or involution, there is no possibility of practically separating the tendency to Unity in the abstract, from the tendency to the concrete centre. Thus the tendency of the atoms to the general centre is, to all practical intents and for all logical purposes, the tendency each to each; and the tendency each to each is the tendency to the centre; and the one tendency may be assumed as the other; whatever will apply to the one must be thoroughly applicable to the other; and, in conclusion, whatever principle will satisfactorily explain the one, cannot be questioned as an explanation of the other.

In looking carefully around me for a rational objection to what I have advanced, I am able to discover *nothing;*—but of that class of objections usually urged by the doubters for Doubt's sake, I very readily perceive *three;* and proceed to dispose of them in order.

It may be said, first: "That the proof that the force of irradiation (in the case described) is directly proportional to the squares of the distances, depends upon an unwarranted assumption—that of the

number of atoms in each stratum being the measure

of the force with which they are emitted."

I reply, not only that I am warranted in such assumption, but that I should be utterly unwarranted in any other. What I assume is, simply, that an effect is the measure of its cause—that every exercise of the Divine Will will be proportional to that which demands the exertion—that the means of Omnipotence, or of Omniscience, will be exactly adapted to its purposes. Neither can a deficiency nor an excess of cause bring to pass any effect. Had the force which irradiated any stratum to its position, been either more or less than was needed for the purpose—that is to say, not directly proportional to the purpose—then to its position that stratum could not have been irradiated. Had the force which, with a view to general equability of distribution, emitted the proper number of atoms for each stratum, been not directly proportional to the number, then the number would not have been the number demanded for the equable distribution.

The second supposable objection is somewhat

better entitled to an answer.

It is an admitted principle in Dynamics that every body, on receiving an impulse, or disposition to move, will move onward in a straight line, in the direction imparted by the impelling force, until deflected, or stopped, by some other force. How then, it may be asked, is my first or external stratum of atoms to be understood as discontinuing their movement at the circumference of the imaginary glass sphere, when no second force, of more than an imaginary character, appears, to account for the discontinuance?

I reply that the objection, in this case, actually does arise out of "an unwarranted assumption"—on

the part of the objector—the assumption of a principle, in Dynamics, at an epoch when no "principles," in anything, exist:—I use the word "principle," of course, in the objector's understanding of the word.

"In the beginning" we can admit-indeed we can comprehend—but one First Cause—the truly ultimate Principle—the Volition of God. The primary act—that of Irradiation from Unity—must have been independent of all that which the world now calls "principle"—because all that we so designate is but a consequence of the reaction of that primary act:—I say "primary" act; for the creation of the absolute material particle is more properly to he regarded as a conception than as an "act" in the ordinary meaning of the term. Thus, we must regard the primary act as an act for the establishment of what we now call "principles." But this primary act itself is to be considered as continuous Volition. The Thought of God is to be understood as originating the Diffusion—as proceeding with it as regulating it—and, finally, as being withdrawn from it upon its completion. Then commences Reaction, and through Reaction, "Principle," as we employ the word. It will be advisable, however, to limit the application of this word to the two immediate results of the discontinuance of the Divine Volition—that is, to the two agents, Attraction and Repulsion. Every other Natural agent depends, either more or less immediately, upon these two, and therefore would be more conveniently designated as sub-principle.

It may be objected, thirdly, that, in general, the peculiar mode of distribution which I have suggested for the atoms, is "an hypothesis and nothing more."

Now, I am aware that the word hypothesis is a ponderous sledge-hammer, grasped immediately,

if not lifted, by all very diminutive thinkers, upon the first appearance of any proposition wearing, in any particular, the garb of a theory. But "hypothesis" cannot be wielded here to any good purpose, even by those who succeed in lifting it—little men or great.

I maintain, first, that only in the mode described is it conceivable that Matter could have been diffused so as to fulfil at once the conditions of irradiation and of generally equable distribution. I maintain, secondly, that these conditions themselves have been imposed upon me, as necessities, in a train of ratiocination as rigorously logical as that which establishes any demonstration in Euclid; and I maintain, thirdly, that even if the charge of "hypothesis" were as fully sustained as it is, in fact, unsustained and untenable, still the validity and indisputability of my result would not, even in the slightest particular, be disturbed.

To explain:—The Newtonian Gravity—a law of Nature—a law whose existence as such no one out of Bedlam questions—a law whose admission as such enables us to account for nine-tenths of the Universal phænomena-a law which, merely because it does so enable us to account for these phænomena, we are perfectly willing, without reference to any other considerations, to admit, and cannot help admitting, as a law-a law, nevertheless, of which neither the principle nor the modus operandi of the principle, has ever yet been traced by the human analysis—a law, in short, which, neither in its detail nor in its generality, has been found susceptible of explanation at all—is at length seen to be at every point thoroughly explicable, provided we only yield our assent to—what? To an hypothesis? Why if an hypothesis—if the merest hypothesis if an hypothesis for whose assumption—as in the

case of that pure hypothesis the Newtonian law itself-no shadow of à priori reason could be assigned—if an hypothesis, even so absolute as all this implies, would enable us to perceive a principle for the Newtonian law-would enable us to understand as satisfied, conditions so miraculously-so ineffably complex and seemingly irreconcileable as those involved in the relations of which Gravity tells us,—what rational being could so expose his fatuity as to call even this absolute hypothesis an hypothesis any longer—unless, indeed, he were to persist in so calling it, with the understanding that he did so, simply for the sake of consistency in words?

But what is the true state of our present case? What is the fact? Not only that is not an hypothesis which we are required to adopt, in order to admit the principle at issue explained, but that it is a logical conclusion which we are requested not to adopt if we can avoid it—which we are simply invited to deny if we can:—a conclusion of so accurate a logicality that to dispute it would be the effort to doubt its validity, beyond our power:—a conclusion from which we see no mode of escape, turn as we will; a result which confronts us either at the end of an inductive journey from the phænomena of the very Law discussed, or at the close of a deductive career from the most rigorously simple of all conceivable assumptions—the assumption, in a word, of Simplicity itself.

And if here, for the mere sake of cavilling, it be urged, that although my starting-point is, as I assert, the assumption of absolute Simplicity, yet Simplicity, considered merely in itself, is no axiom; and that only deductions from axioms are indisputable

—it is thus that I reply:—

Every other science than Logic is the science of certain concrete relations. Arithmetic, for example,

is the science of the relations of number—Geometry, of the relations of form—Mathematics in general, of the relations of quantity in general—of whatever can be increased or diminished. Logic, however, is the science of Relation in the abstract—of absolute Relation—of Relation considered solely in itself. An axiom in any particular science other than Logic is, thus, merely a proposition announcing certain concrete relations which seem to be too obvious for dispute—as when we say, for instance, that the whole is greater than its part;—and, thus again, the principle of the Logical axiom—in other words, of an axiom in the abstract—is, simply, obviousness of relation. Now, it is clear, not only that what is obvious to one mind may not be obvious to another, but that what is obvious to one mind at one epoch, may be anything but obvious, at another epoch, to the same mind. It is clear, moreover, that what, to-day, is obvious even to the majority of mankind, or to the majority of the best intellects of mankind. may to-morrow be, to either majority, more or less obvious, or in no respect obvious at all. It is seen. then, that the axiomatic principle itself is susceptible of variation, and of course that axioms are susceptible of similar change. Being mutable, the "truths" which grow out of them are necessarily mutable too; or, in other words, are never to be positively depended upon as truths at all-since Truth and Immutability are one.

It will now be readily understood that no axiomatic idea—no idea founded in the fluctuating principle, obviousness of relation—can possibly be so secure—so reliable a basis for any structure erected by the Reason, as that idea—(whatever it is, whereever we can find it, or if it be practicable to find it anywhere)—which is irrelative altogether—which

not only presents to the understanding no obviousness of relation, either greater or less, to be considered, but subjects the intellect, not in the slightest degree, to the necessity of even looking at any relation at all. If such an idea be not what we too heedlessly term "an axiom," it is at least preferable, as a Logical basis, to any axiom ever propounded, or to all imaginable axioms combined:and such, precisely, is the idea with which my deductive process, so thoroughly corroborated by induction, commences. My particle proper is but absolute Irrelation. To sum up what has been advanced:—As a starting point I have taken it for granted, simply, that the Beginning had nothing behind it or before it—that it was a Beginning in fact—that it was a beginning and nothing different from a beginning—in short, that this Beginning was —that which it was. If this be a "mere assumption" then a "mere assumption" let it be.

To conclude this branch of the subject:—I am fully warranted in announcing that the Law which we have been in the habit of calling Gravity exists on account of Matter's having been irradiated, at its origin, atomically, into a limited* sphere of Space, from one, individual, unconditional, irrelative, and absolute Particle Proper, by the sole process in which it was possible to satisfy, at the same time, the two conditions, irradiation, and generally-equable distribution throughout the sphere—that is to say, by a force varying in direct proportion with the squares of the distances between the irradiated atoms, respectively, and the Particular centre of Irradiation.

I have already given my reasons for presuming Matter to have been diffused by a determinate

^{*&}quot;Limited sphere"—A sphere is necessarily limited. I prefer tautology to a chance of misconception.

rather than by a continuous or infinitely continued force. Supposing a continuous force, we should be unable, in the first place, to comprehend a reaction at all; and we should be required, in the second place, to entertain the impossible conception of an infinite extension of Matter. Not to dwell upon the impossibility of the conception, the infinite extension of Matter is an idea which, if not positively disproved, is at least not in any respect warranted by telescopic observation of the stars—a point to be explained more fully hereafter; and this empirical reason for believing in the original finity of Matter is unempirically confirmed. For example:—Admitting, for the moment, the possibility of understanding Space filled with the irradiated atoms—that is to say, admitting, as well as we can, for argument's sake, that the succession of the irradiated atoms had absolutely no end—then it is abundantly clear that, even when the Volition of God had been withdrawn from them, and thus the tendency to return into Unity permitted (abstractly) to be satisfied, this permission would have been nugatory and invalid practically valueless and of no effect whatever. No Reaction could have taken place; no movement toward Unity could have been made: no Law of Gravity could have obtained.

To explain:—Grant the abstract tendency of any one atom to any one other as the inevitable result of diffusion from the normal Unity:—or, what is the same thing, admit any given atom as proposing to move in any given direction—it is clear that, since there is an infinity of atoms on all sides of the atom proposing to move, it never can actually move toward the satisfaction of its tendency in the direction given, on account of a precisely equal and counter-balancing tendency in the direction dia-

metrically opposite. In other words, exactly as many tendencies to Unity are behind the hesitating atom as before it; for it is a mere sotticism to say that one infinite line is longer or shorter than another infinite line, or that one infinite number is greater or less than another number that is infinite. Thus the atom in question must remain stationary forever. Under the impossible circumstances which we have been merely endeavoring to conceive for argument's sake, there could have been no aggregation of Matter—no stars—no worlds—nothing but a perpetually atomic and inconsequential Universe. In fact, view it as we will, the whole idea of unlimited Matter is not only untenable, but impossible and preposterous.

With the understanding of a sphere of atoms, however, we perceive, at once, a satisfiable tendency to union. The general result of the tendency each to each, being a tendency of all to the centre, the general process of condensation, or approximation, commences immediately, by a common and simultaneous movement, on withdrawal of the Divine Volition; the individual approximations, or coalescences—not coalitions—of atom with atom, being subject to almost infinite variations of time, degree, and condition, on account of the excessive multiplicity of relation, arising from the differences of form assumed as characterizing the atoms at the moment of their quitting the Particle Proper; as well as from the subsequent particular inequidistance, each from each.

What I wish to impress upon the reader is the certainty of there arising, at once, (on withdrawal of the diffusive force, or Divine Volition,) out of the condition of the atoms as described, at innumerable points throughout the Universal sphere, innumer-

able agglomerations, characterized by innumerable specific differences of form, size, essential nature, and distance each from each. The development of Repulsion (Electricity) must have commenced, of course, with the very earliest particular efforts at Unity, and must have proceeded constantly in the ratio of Coalescence—that is to say, in that of Condensation, or, again, of Heterogeneity.

Thus the two Principles Proper, Attraction and Repulsion—the Material and the Spiritual—accompany each other, in the strictest fellowship, forever. Thus The Body and The Soul walk hand in

hand.

If now, in fancy, we select any one of the agglomerations considered as in their primary stages throughout the Universal sphere, and suppose this incipient agglomeration to be taking place at that point where the centre of our Sun exists-or rather where it did exist originally; for the Sun is perpetually shifting his position—we shall find ourselves met, and borne onward for a time at least, by the most magnificent of theories-by the Nebular Cosmogony of Laplace:—although "Cosmogony" is far too comprehensive a term for what he really discusseswhich is the constitution of our solar system alone of one among the myriad of similar systems which make up the Universe Proper—that Universal sphere—that all-inclusive and absolute Kosmos which forms the subject of my present Discourse.

Confining himself to an obviously limited region—that of our solar system with its comparatively immediate vicinity—and merely assuming—that is to say, assuming without any basis whatever, either deductive or inductive—much of what I have been just endeavoring to place upon a more stable basis than assumption; assuming, for example, matter

as diffused (without pretending to account for the diffusion) throughout, and somewhat beyond, the space occupied by our system—diffused in a state of heterogeneous nebulosity and obedient to that omniprevalent law of Gravity at whose principle he ventured to make no guess; assuming all this (which is quite true, although he had no logical right to its assumption) Laplace has shown, dynamically and mathematically, that the results in such case necessarily ensuing, are those and those alone which we find manifested in the actually existing condition of the system itself.

To explain:-Let us conceive that particular agglomeration of which we have just spoken—the one at the point designated by our Sun's centre—to have so far proceeded that a vast quantity of nebulous matter has here assumed a roughly globular form; its centre being, of course, coincident with what is now, or rather was originally, the centre of our Sun; and its periphery extending out beyond the orbit of Neptune, the most remote of our planets:-in other words, let us suppose the diameter of this rough sphere to be some 6000 millions of miles. For ages, this mass of matter has been undergoing condensation, until at length it has become reduced into the bulk we imagine; having proceeded gradually, of course, from its atomic and imperceptible state, into what we understand of visible, palpable, or otherwise appreciable nebulosity.

Now, the condition of this mass implies a rotation about an imaginary axis—a rotation which, commencing with the absolute incipiency of the aggregation, has been ever since acquiring velocity. The very first two atoms which met, approaching each other from points not diametrically opposite, would, in rushing partially past each other, form a nucleus

for the rotary movement described. How this would increase in velocity, is readily seen. The two atoms are joined by others:—an aggregation is formed. The mass continues to rotate while condensing. But any atom at the circumference has, of course, a more rapid motion than one nearer the centre. The outer atom, however, with its superior velocity, approaches the centre; carrying this superior velocity with it as it goes. Thus every atom, proceeding inwardly, and finally attaching itself to the condensed centre, adds something to the original velocity of that centre—that is to say, increases the rotary movement of the mass.

Let us now suppose this mass so far condensed that it occupies precisely the space circumscribed by the orbit of Neptune, and that the velocity with which the surface of the mass moves, in the general rotation, is precisely that velocity with which Neptune now revolves about the Sun. At this epoch, then, we are to understand that the constantly increasing centrifugal force, having gotten the better of the non-increasing centripetal, loosened and separated the exterior and least condensed stratum, or a few of the exterior and least condensed strata, at the equator of the sphere, where the tangential velocity predominated; so that these strata formed about the main body an independent ring encircling the equatorial regions:-just as the exterior portion thrown off by excessive velocity of rotation, from a grindstone, would form a ring about the grindstone, but for the solidity of the superficial material: were this caoutchouc, or anything similar in consistency precisely the phænomenon I describe would be presented.

The ring thus whirled from the nebulous mass, revolved, of course, as a separate ring, with just that

velocity with which, while the surface of the mass, it rotated. In the meantime, condensation still proceeding, the interval between the discharged ring and the main body continued to increase, until the former was left at a vast distance from the latter.

Now, admitting the ring to have possessed, by some seemingly accidental arrangement of its heterogeneous materials, a constitution nearly uniform, then this ring, as such, would never have ceased revolving about its primary; but, as might have been anticipated, there appears to have been enough irregularity in the disposition of the materials, to make them cluster about centres of superior solidity; and thus the annular form was destroyed.* No doubt, the band was soon broken up into several portions, and one of these portions, predominating in mass, absorbed the others into itself; the whole settling, spherically, into a planet. That this latter, as a planet, continued the revolutionary movement which characterized it while a ring, is sufficiently clear; and that it took upon itself, also, an additional movement in its new condition of sphere, is readily explained. The ring being understood as yet unbroken, we see that its exterior, while the whole revolves about the parent body, moves more rapidly than its interior. When the rupture occurred, then, some portion in each fragment must have been moving with greater velocity than the others. The superior movement prevailing, must have whirled each fragment round—that is to say, have caused it to rotate; and the direction

^{*} Laplace assumed his nebulosity heterogeneous, merely that he might be thus enabled to account for the breaking up of the rings; for had the nebulosity been homogeneous, they would not have broken. I reach the same result—heterogeneity of the secondary masses immediately resulting from the atoms—purely from an à priori consideration of their general design—Relation.

of the rotation must, of course, have been the direction of the revolution whence it arose. All the fragments having become subject to the rotation described, must, in coalescing, have imparted it to the one planet constituted by their coalescence.-This planet was Neptune. Its material continuing to undergo condensation, and the centrifugal force generated in its rotation, getting, at length, the better of the centripetal, as before in the case of the parent orb, a ring was whirled also from the equatorial surface of this planet: this ring, having been uniform in its constitution, was broken up, and its several fragments, being absorbed by the most massive, were collectively spherified into a moon. Subsequently, the operation was repeated, and a second moon was the result. We thus account for the planet Neptune, with the two satellites which accompany him.

In throwing off a ring from its equator, the Sun re-established that equilibrium between its centripetal and centrifugal forces which had been disturbed in the process of condensation; but, as this condensation still proceeded, the equilibrium was again immediately disturbed, through the increase of rotation. By the time the mass had so far shrunk that it occupied a spherical space just that circumscribed by the orbit of Uranus, we are to understand that the centrifugal force had so far obtained the ascendency that new relief was needed: a second equatorial band was, consequently, thrown off, which, proving ununiform, was broken up, as before in the case of Neptune; the fragments settling into the planet Uranus; the velocity of whose actual revolution about the Sun indicates, of course, the rotary speed of that Sun's equatorial surface at the moment of the separation. Uranus, adopting a rotation from the collective rotations of the fragments composing it, as previously explained, now threw off ring after ring; each of which, becoming broken up, settled into a moon:—three moons, at different epochs, having been formed, in this manner, by the rupture and general spherification of as many distinct ununiform rings.

By the time the Sun had shrunk until it occupied a space just that circumscribed by the orbit of Saturn, the balance, we are to suppose, between its centripetal and centrifugal forces had again become so far disturbed, through increase of rotary velocity, the result of condensation, that a third effort at equilibrium became necessary; and an annular band was therefore whirled off, as twice before; which, on rupture through ununiformity, became consolidated into the planet Saturn. This latter threw off, in the first place, seven uniform bands, which, on rupture, were spherified respectively into as many moons; but, subsequently, it appears to have discharged, at three distinct but not very distant epochs, three rings whose equability of constitution was, by apparent accident, so considerable as to present no occasion for their rupture; thus they continue to revolve as rings. I use the phrase "apparent accident;" for of accident in the ordinary sense there was, of course, nothing:-the term is properly applied only to the result of indistinguishable or not immediate traceable law.

Shrinking still farther, until it occupied just the space circumscribed by the orbit of Jupiter, the Sun now found need of farther effort to restore the counterbalance of its two forces, continually disarranged in the still continued increase of rotation. Jupiter, accordingly, was now thrown off; passing from the annular to the planetary condition; and, on attain-

ing this latter, threw off in its turn, at four different epochs, four rings, which finally resolved them-

selves into so many moons.

Still shrinking, until its sphere occupied just the space defined by the orbit of the Asteroids, the Sun now discarded a ring which appears to have had eight centres of superior solidity, and, on breaking up, to have separated into eight fragments, no one of which so far predominated in mass as to absorb the others. All therefore, as distinct although comparatively small planets, proceeded to revolve in orbits whose distances, each from each, may be considered as in some degree the measure of the force which drove them asunder:—all the orbits, nevertheless, being so closely coincident as to admit of our calling them one, in view of the other planetary orbits.

Continuing to shrink, the Sun, on becoming so small as just to fill the orbit of Mars, now discharged this planet—of course by the process repeatedly described. Having no moon, however, Mars could have thrown off no ring. In fact, an epoch had now arrived in the career of the parent body, the centre of the system. The decrease of its nebulosity, which is the increase of its density, and which again is the decrease of its condensation, out of which latter arose the constant disturbance of equilibrium—must, by this period, have attained a point at which the efforts for restoration would have been more and more ineffectual just in proportion as they were less frequently needed. Thus the processes of which we have been speaking would everywhere show signs of exhaustion—in the planets, first, and secondly, in the original mass. We must not fall into the error of supposing the decrease of interval observed among the planets as we approach the Sun, to be in any respect indicative of an increase of frequency in the periods at which they were discarded. Exactly the converse is to be understood. The longest interval of time must have occurred between the discharges of the two interior; the shortest, between those of the two exterior, planets. The decrease of the interval of space is, nevertheless, the measure of the density, and thus inversely of the condensation, of the Sun, throughout the processes detailed.

Having shrunk, however, so far as to fill only the orbit of our Earth, the parent sphere whirled from itself still one other body—the Earth—in a condition so nebulous as to admit of this body's discarding, in its turn, yet another, which is our Moon;—but here terminated the lunar formations.

Finally, subsiding to the orbits first of Venus and then of Mercury, the Sun discarded these two interior planets; neither of which has given birth to

any moon.

Thus from his original bulk—or, to speak more accurately, from the condition in which we first considered him—from a partially spherified nebular mass, certainly much more than 5,600 millions of miles in diameter—the great central orb and origin of our solar-planetary-lunar system, has gradually descended, by condensation, in obedience to the law of Gravity, to a globe only 882,000 miles in diameter; but it by no means follows, either that its condensation is yet complete, or that it may not still possess the capacity of whirling from itself another planet.

I have here given—in outline of course, but still with all the detail necessary for distinctness—a view of the Nebular Theory as its author himself conceived it. From whatever point we regard it,

we shall find it beautifully true. It is by far too beautiful, indeed, not to possess Truth as its essentiality—and here I am very profoundly serious in what I say. In the revolution of the satellites of Uranus, there does appear something seemingly inconsistent with the assumptions of Laplace; but that one inconsistency can invalidate a theory constructed from a million of intricate consistencies, is a fancy fit only for the fantastic. In prophesying, confidently, that the apparent anomaly to which I refer, will, sooner or later, be found one of the strongest possible corroborations of the general hypothesis, I pretend to no especial spirit of divination. It is a matter which the only difficulty seems not to foresee.*

The bodies whirled off in the processes described, would exchange, it has been seen, the superficial rotation of the orbs whence they originated, for a revolution of equal velocity about these orbs as distant centres; and the revolution thus engendered must proceed, so long as the centripetal force, or that with which the discarded body gravitates toward its parent, is neither greater nor less than that by which it was discarded; that is, than the centrifugal, or, far more properly, than the tangential, velocity. From the unity, however, of the origin of these two forces, we might have expected to find them as they are found—the one accurately counterbalancing the other. It has been shown, indeed, that the act of whirling-off is, in every case. merely an act for the preservation of the counterbalance.

After referring, however, the centripetal force

^{*} I am prepared to show that the anomalous revolution of the satellites of Uranus is a simply perspective anomaly arising from the inclination of the axis of the planet.

to the omniprevalent law of Gravity, it has been the fashion with astronomical treatises, to seek beyond the limits of mere Nature—that is to say, of Secondary Cause—a solution of the phænomenon of tangential velocity. This latter they attribute directly to a First Cause—to God. The force which carries a stellar body around its primary they assert to have originated in an impulse given immediately by the finger—this is the childish phraseology employed—by the finger of Deity itself. In this view, the planets, fully formed, are conceived to have been hurled from the Divine hand, to a position in the vicinity of the suns, with an impetus mathematically adapted to the masses, or attractive capacities, of the suns themselves. An idea so grossly unphilosophical, although so supinely adopted, could have arisen only from the difficulty of otherwise accounting for the absolutely accurate adaptation, each to each, of two forces so seemingly independent, one of the other, as are the gravitating and tangential. But it should be remembered that, for a long time, the coincidence between the moon's rotation and her sidereal revolution-two matters seemingly far more independent than those now considered—was looked upon as positively miraculous; and there was a strong disposition, even among astronomers, to attribute the marvel to the direct and continual agency of God-who, in this case, it was said, had found it necessary to interpose, specially, among his general laws, a set of subsidiary regulations, for the purpose of forever concealing from mortal eyes the glories, or perhaps the horrors, of the other side of the Moon-of that mysterious hemisphere which has always avoided, and must perpetually avoid, the telescopic scrutiny of mankind. The advance of Science, however.

soon demonstrated—what to the philosophical instinct needed *no* demonstration—that the one movement is but a portion—something more, even, than a consequence—of the other.

For my part, I have no patience with fantasies at once so timorous, so idle, and so awkward. They belong to the veriest cowardice of thought. That Nature and the God of Nature are distinct, no thinking being can long doubt. By the former we imply merely the laws of the latter. But with the very idea of God, omnipotent, omniscient, we entertain, also, the idea of the infallibility of his laws. With Him there being neither Past nor Future with Him all being Now-do we not insult him in supposing his laws so contrived as not to provide for every possible contingency?—or, rather, what idea can we have of any possible contingency, except that it is at once a result and a manifestation of his laws? He who, divesting himself of prejudice, shall have the rare courage to think absolutely for himself, cannot fail to arrive, in the end, at the condensation of laws into Law—cannot fail of reaching the conclusion that each law of Nature is dependent at all points upon all other laws, and that all are but consequences of one primary exercise of the Divine Volition. Such is the principle of the Cosmogony which, with all necessary deference, I here venture to suggest and to maintain.

In this view, it will be seen that, dismissing as frivolous, and even impious, the fancy of the tangential force having been imparted to the planets immediately by "the finger of God," I consider this force as originating in the rotation of the stars:—this rotation as brought about by the in-rushing of the primary atoms, towards their respective centres of aggregation:—this in-rushing as the con-

sequence of the law of Gravity:—this law as but the mode in which is necessarily manifested the tendency of the atoms to return into imparticularity:—this tendency to return as but the inevitable reaction of the first and most sublime of Acts—that act by which a God, self-existing and alone existing, became all things at once, through dint of his volition, while all things were thus constituted a portion of God.

The radical assumptions of this Discourse suggest to me, and in fact imply, certain important modifications of the Nebular Theory as given by Laplace. The efforts of the repulsive power I have considered as made for the purpose of preventing contact among the atoms, and thus as made in the ratio of the approach to contact—that is to say, in the ratio of condensation.* In other words, Electricity, with its involute phænomena, heat, light and magnetism, is to be understood as proceeding as condensation proceeds, and, of course, inversely, as destiny proceeds, or the cessation to condense. Thus the Sun, in the process of its aggregation, must soon, in developing repulsion, have become excessively heated—perhaps incandescent: and we can perceive how the operation of discarding its rings must have been materially assisted by the slight incrustation of its surface consequent on cooling. Any common experiment shows us how readily a crust of the character suggested, is separated, through heterogeneity, from the interior mass. But, on every successive rejection of the crust, the new surface would appear incandescent as before; and the period at which it would again become so far incrusted as to be readily loosened and discharged, may well be imagined as exactly

^{*} See page 191.

coincident with that at which a new effort would be needed, by the whole mass, to restore the equilibrium of its two forces, disarranged through condensation. In other words:—by the time the electric influence (Repulsion) has prepared the surface for rejection, we are to understand that the gravitating influence (Attraction) is precisely ready to reject it. Here, then, as everywhere, the Body and the Soul walk hand in hand.

These ideas are empirically confirmed at all points. Since condensation can never, in any body, be considered as absolutely at an end, we are warranted in anticipating that, whenever we have an opportunity of testing the matter, we shall find indications of resident luminosity in all the stellar bodiesmoons and planets as well as suns. That our Moon is strongly self-luminous, we see at every total eclipse, when, if not so, she would disappear. On the dark part of the satellite, too, during her phases, we often observe flashes like our own Auroras; and that these latter, with our various other so-called electrical phænomena, without reference to any more steady radiance, must give our Earth a certain appearance of luminosity to an inhabitant of the Moon, is quite evident. In fact, we should regard all the phænomena referred to, as mere mainfestations, in different moods and degrees, of the Earth's feebly-continued condensation.

If my views are tenable, we should be prepared to find the newer planets—that is to say, those nearer the Sun—more luminous than those older and more remote:—and the extreme brilliancy of Venus (on whose dark portions, during her phases, the Auroras are frequently visible) does not seem to be altogether accounted for by her mere proximity to the central orb. She is no doubt vividly

self-luminous, although less so than Mercury: while the luminosity of Neptune may be comparatively nothing.

Admitting what I have urged, it is clear that, from the moment of the Sun's discarding a ring, there must be a continuous diminution both of his heat and light, on account of the continuous incrustation of his surface; and that a period would arrive—the period immediately previous to a new discharge—when a very material decrease of both light and heat, must become apparent. Now, we know that tokens of such changes are distinctly recognisable. On the Melville islands—to adduce merely one out of a hundred examples—we find traces of ultra-tropical vegetation—of plants that never could have flourished without immensely more light and heat than are at present afforded by our Sun to any portion of the surface of the Earth. Is such vegetation referable to an epoch immediately subsequent to the whirling-off of Venus? At this epoch must have occurred to us our greatest access of solar influence; and, in fact, this influence must then have attained its maximum:—leaving out of view, of course, the period when the Earth itself was discarded—the period of its mere organization.

Again:—we know that there exist non-luminous suns—that is to say, suns whose existence we determine through the movements of others, but whose luminosity is not sufficient to impress us. Are these suns invisible merely on account of the length of time elapsed since their discharge of a planet? And yet again:—may we not—at least in certain cases—account for the sudden appearances of suns where none had been previously suspected, by the hypothesis that, having rolled with incrusted surfaces throughout the few thousand years of our

astronomical history, each of these suns, in whirling off a new secondary, has at length been enabled to display the glories of its still incandescent interior?—To the well-ascertained fact of the proportional increase of heat as we descend into the Earth, I need of course, do nothing more than refer:—it comes in the strongest possible corroboration of all that I have said on the topic now at issue.

In speaking, not long ago, of the repulsive or electrical influence, I remarked that "the important phænomena of vitality, consciousness, and thought, whether we observe them generally or in detail, seem to proceed at least in the ratio of the heterogeneous."* I mentioned, too, that I would recur to the suggestion:—and this is the proper point at which to do so. Looking at the matter, first, in detail, we perceive that not merely the manifestation of vitality, but its importance, consequences, and elevation of character, keep pace, very closely, with the heterogeneity, or complexity, of the animal structure. Looking at the question, now, in its generality, and referring to the first movements of the atoms towards mass-constitution, we find that heterogeneousness, brought about directly through condensation, is proportional with it forever. We thus reach the proposition that the importance of the development of the terrestrial vitality proceeds equably with the terrestrial condensation.

Now this is in precise accordance with what we know of the succession of animals on the Earth. As it has proceeded in its condensation, superior and still superior races have appeared. Is it impossible that the successive geological revolutions which have attended, at least, if not immediately caused, these successive elevations of vitalic charac-

^{*} Page 159.

ter—is it improbable that these revolutions have themselves been produced by the successive planetary discharges from the Sun—in other words, by the successive variations in the solar influence on the Earth? Were this idea tenable, we should not be unwarranted in the fancy that the discharge of yet a new planet, interior to Mercury, may give rise to yet a new modification of the terrestrial surface—a modification from which may spring a race both materially and spiritually superior to Man. These thoughts impress me with all the force of truth—but I throw them out, of course, merely in their obvious character of suggestion.

The Nebular Theory of Laplace has lately received far more confirmation than it needed, at the hands of the philosopher, Compte. These two have thus together shown-not, to be sure, that Matter at any period actually existed as described, in a state of nebular diffusion, but that, admitting it so to have existed throughout the space and much beyond the space now occupied by our solar system, and to have commenced a movement towards a centre—it must gradually have assumed the various forms and motions which are now seen, in that system, to obtain. A demonstration such as this—a dynamical and mathematical demonstration, as far as demonstration can be—unquestionable and unquestioned—unless, indeed, by that unprofitable and disreputable tribe, the professional questioners—the mere madmen who deny the Newtonian law of Gravity on which the results of the French mathematicians are based a demonstration, I say, such as this, would to most intellects be conclusive—and I confess that it is so to mine—of the validity of the nebular hypothesis upon which the demonstration depends.

That the demonstration does not prove the hy-

pothesis, according to the common understanding of the word "proof," I admit, of course. To show that certain existing results—that certain established facts-may be, even mathematically, accounted for by the assumption of a certain hypothesis, is by no means to establish the hypothesis itself. In other words:—to show that, certain data being given, a certain existing result might, or even must, have ensued, will fail to prove that this result did ensue, from the data, until such time as it shall be also shown that there are, and can be, no other data from which the result in question might equally have ensued. But, in the case now discussed, although all must admit the deficiency of what we are in the habit of terming "proof," still there are many intellects, and those of the loftiest order, to which no proof could bring one iota of additional conviction. Without going into details which might impinge upon the Cloud-Land of Metaphysics, I may as well here observe, that the force of conviction, in cases such as this, will always, with the right-thinking, be proportional to the amount of complexity intervening between the hypothesis and the result. To be less abstract:—The greatness of the complexity found existing among cosmical conditions, by rendering great in the same proportion the difficulty of accounting for all these conditions, at once, strengthens, also in the same proportion, our faith in that hypothesis which does, in such manner, satisfactorily account for them:—and as no complexity can well be conceived greater than that of the astronomical conditions, so no conviction can be stronger —to my mind at least—than that with which I am impressed by an hypothesis that not only reconciles these conditions, with mathematical accuracy, and reduces them into a consistent and intelligible whole, but is, at the same time, the *sole* hypothesis by means of which the human intellect has been ever enabled to account for them *at all*.

A most unfounded opinion has been latterly current in gossiping and even in scientific circles the opinion that the so-called Nebular Cosmogony has been overthrown. This fancy has arisen from the report of late observations made, among what hitherto have been termed the "nebulæ," through the large telescope of Cincinnati, and the worldrenowned instrument of Lord Rosse. Certain spots in the firmament which presented, even to the most powerful of the old telescopes, the appearance of nebulosity, or haze, had been regarded for a long time as confirming the theory of Laplace. They were looked upon as stars in that very process of condensation which I have been attempting to describe. Thus it was supposed that we "had ocular evidence"—an evidence, by the way, which has always been found very questionable-of the truth of the hypothesis; and, although certain telescopic improvements, every now and then, enabled us to perceive that a spot, here and there, which we had been classing among the nebulæ, was, in fact, but a cluster of stars deriving its nebular character only from its immensity of distance still it was thought that no doubt could exist as to the actual nebulosity of numerous other masses, the strong-holds of the nebulists, bidding defiance to every effort at segregation. Of these latter the most interesting was the great "nebulæ" in the constellation Orion:—but this, with innumerable other miscalled "nebulæ," when viewed through the magnificent modern telescopes, has become resolved into a simple collection of stars. Now this fact has been very generally understood as conclusive against the Nebular Hypothesis of Laplace; and, on announcement of the discoveries in question, the most enthusiastic defender and most eloquent popularizer of the theory, Dr. Nichol, went so far as to "admit the necessity of abandoning" an idea which had formed the material of his most praiseworthy book.*

Many of my readers will no doubt be inclined to say that the result of these new investigations has at least a strong tendency to overthrow the hypothesis; while some of them, more thoughtful, will suggest that, although the theory is by no means disproved through the segregation of the particular "nebulæ" alluded to, still a failure to segregate them, with such telescopes, might well have been understood as a triumphant corroboration of the theory: and this latter class will be surprised, perhaps, to hear me say that even with them I disagree. If the propositions of this Discourse have been comprehended, it will be seen that, in my view, a failure to segregate the "nebulæ" would have tended to the refutation, rather than to the confirmation, of the Nebular Hypothesis.

Let me explain:—The Newtonian Law of Gravity we may, of course, assume as demonstrated. This law, it will be remembered, I have referred to the reaction of the first Divine Act—to the reaction of an exercise of the Divine Volition temporarily overcoming a difficulty. This difficulty is that of forc-

*"Views of the Architecture of the Heavens." A letter, purporting to be from Dr. Nichol to a friend in America, went the rounds of our newspapers, about two years ago, I think, admitting "the necessity" to which I refer. In a subsequent Lecture, however, Dr. N. appears in some manner to have gotten the better of the necessity, and does not quite renounce the theory, although he seems to wish that he could sneer at it as "a purely hypothetical one." What else was the Law of Gravity before the Maskelyne experiments? and who questioned the Law of Gravity, even then?

ing the normal into the abnormal—of impelling that whose originality, and therefore whose rightful condition, was One, to take upon itself the wrongful condition of Many. It is only by conceiving this difficulty as temporarily overcome, that we can comprehend a reaction. There could have been no reaction had the act been infinitely continued. So long as the act lasted, no reaction, of course, could commence; in other words, no gravitation could take place—for we have considered the one as but the manifestation of the other. But gravitation has taken place; therefore the act of Creation has ceased: and gravitation has long ago taken place; therefore the act of Creation has long ago ceased. We can no more expect, then, to observe the primary processes of Creation; and to those primary processes the condition of nebulosity has already been explained to belong.

Through what we know of the propagation of light, we have direct proof that the more remote of the stars have existed, under the forms in which we now see them, for an inconceivable number of years. So far back at least, then, as the period when these stars underwent condensation, must have been the epoch at which the mass-constitutive processes began. That we may conceive these processes, then, as still going on in the case of certain "nebulæ," while in all other cases we find them thoroughly at an end, we are forced into assumptions for which we have really no basis whatever-we have to thrust in, again, upon the revolting Reason, the blasphemous idea, of special interposition—we have to supose that, in the particular instances of these "nebulæ," an unerring God found it necessary to introduce certain supplementary regulations —certain improvements of the general law—certain

re-touchings and emendations, in a word, which had the effect of deferring the completion of these individual stars for centuries of centuries beyond the æra during which all the other stellar bodies had time, not only to be fully constituted, but to

grow hoary with an unspeakable old age.

Of course, it will be immediately objected that since the light by which we recognise the nebulæ now, must be merely that which left their surfaces a vast number of years ago, the processes at present observed, or supposed to be observed, are, in fact, not processes now actually going on, but the phantoms of processes completed long in the Past-just as I maintain all these mass-constitutive processes must have been.

To this I reply that neither is the now-observed condition of the condensed stars their actual condition, but a condition completed long in the Past; so that my argument drawn from the relative condition of the stars and the "nebulæ," is in no manner disturbed. Moreover, those who maintain the existence of nebulæ, do not refer the nebulosity to extreme distance; they declare it a real and not merely a perspective nebulosity. That we may conceive, indeed, a nebular mass as visible at all, we must conceive it as very near us in comparison with the condensed stars brought into view by the modern telescopes. In maintaining the appearances in question, then, to be really nebulous, we maintain their comparative vicinity to our point of view. Thus, their condition, as we see them now, must be referred to an epoch far less remote than that to which we may refer the now-observed condition of at least the majority of the stars.-In a word, should Astronomy ever demonstrate a "nebula," in the sense at present intended, I should consider the Nebular Cosmogony—not, indeed, as corroborated by the demonstration—but as thereby irretrievably overthrown.

By way, however, of rendering unto Cæsar no more than the things that are Cæsar's, let me here remark that the assumption of the hypothesis which led him to so glorious a result, seems to have been suggested to Laplace in great measure by a misconception—by the very misconception of which we have just been speaking—by the generally prevalent misunderstanding of the character of the nebulæ, so mis-named. These he supposed to be, in reality, what their designation implies. The fact is, this great man had, very properly, an inferior faith in his own merely perceptive powers. In respect, therefore, to the actual existence of nebulæ—an existence so confidently maintained by his telescopic contemporaries—he depended less upon what he saw than upon what he heard.

It will be seen that the only valid objections to his theory, are those made to its hypothesis as such —to what suggested it—not to what it suggests; to its propositions rather than to its results. His most unwarranted assumption was that of giving the atoms a movement towards a centre, in the very face of his evident understanding that these atoms, in unlimited succession, extended throughout the Universal space. I have already shown that, under such circumstances, there could have occurred no movement at all; and Laplace, consequently, assumed one on no more philosophical ground than that something of the kind was necessary for the establishment of what he intended to establish.

His original idea seems to have been a compound of the true Epicurean atoms with the false nebulæ of his contemporaries; and thus his theory presents us with the singular anomaly of absolute truth deduced, as a mathematical result, from a hybrid datum of ancient imagination intertangled with modern inacumen. Laplace's real strength lay, in fact, in an almost miraculous mathematical instinct:—on this he relied; and in no instance did it fail or deceive him:—in the case of the Nebular Cosmogony, it led him, blindfolded, through a labyrinth of Error, into one of the most luminous and stupendous temples of Truth.

Let us now fancy, for the moment, that the ring first thrown off by the Sun-that is to say, the ring whose breaking-up constituted Neptune-did not, in fact, break up until the throwing-off of the ring out of which Uranus arose; that this latter ring, again, remained perfect until the discharge of that out of which sprang Saturn; that this latter, again, remained entire until the discharge of that from which originated Jupiter-and so on. Let us imagine, in a word, that no dissolution occurred among the rings until the final rejection of that which gave birth to Mercury. We thus paint to the eye of the mind a series of coexistent concentric circles; and looking as well at them as at the processes by which, according to Laplace's hypothesis, they were constructed, we perceive at once a very singular analogy with the atomic strata and the process of the original irradiation as I have described it. Is it impossible that, on measuring the forces, respectively, by which each successive planetary circle was thrown off-that is to say, on measuring the successive excesses of rotation over gravitation which occasioned the successive discharges—we should find the analogy in question more decidedly confirmed? Is it improbable that we should discover these forces to have varied—as in the original radiation—proportionally to the squares of the distances?

Our solar system, consisting, in chief, of one sun, with sixteen planets certainly, and possibly a few more, revolving about it at various distances, and attended by seventeen moons assuredly, but very probably by several others—is now to be considered as an example of the innumerable agglomerations which proceeded to take place throughout the Universal Sphere of atoms on withdrawal of the Divine Volition. I mean to say that our solar system is to be understood as affording a generic instance of these agglomerations, or, more correctly, of the ulterior conditions at which they arrived. If we keep our attention fixed on the idea of the utmost possible Relation as the Omnipotent design, and on the precautions taken to accomplish it through difference of form, among the original atoms, and particular inequidistance, we shall find it impossible to suppose for a moment that even any two of the incipient agglomerations reached precisely the same result in the end. We shall rather be inclined to think that no two stellar bodies in the Universewhether suns, planets or moons—are particularly, while all are generally, similar. Still less, then, can we imagine any two assemblages of such bodies -any two "systems"-as having more than a general resemblance.* Our telescopes, at this point, thoroughly confirm our deductions. Taking our own solar system, then, as merely a loose or general

^{*} It is not impossible that some unlooked-for optical improvement may disclose to us, among innumerable varieties of systems, a luminous sun, encircled by luminous and non-luminous rings, within and without and between which, revolve luminous and non-luminous planets, attended by moons having moons—and even these latter again having moons.

type of all, we have so far proceeded in our subject as to survey the Universe under the aspect of a spherical space, throughout which, dispersed with merely general equability, exist a number of but generally similar systems.

Let us now, expanding our conceptions, look upon each of these systems as in itself an atom; which in fact it is, when we consider it as but one of the countless myriads of systems which constitute the Universe. Regarding all, then, as but colossal atoms, each with the same ineradicable tendency to Unity which characterizes the actual atoms of which it consists—we enter at once upon a new order of aggregations. The smaller systems, in the vicinity of a larger one, would, inevitably, be drawn into still closer vicinity. A thousand would assemble here; a million there—perhaps here, again, even a billion—leaving, thus, immeasurable vacancies in space. And if, now, it be demanded why, in the case of these systems—of these merely Titanic atoms-I speak, simply, of an "assemblage," and not, as in the case of the actual atoms, of a more or less consolidated agglomeration:—if it be asked, for instance, why I do not carry what I suggest to its legitimate conclusion, and describe, at once, these assemblages of system-atoms as rushing to consolidation in spheres—as each becoming condensed into one magnificent sun-my reply is that μελλοντα ταυτα—I am but pausing, for a moment, on the awful threshold of the Future. For the present, calling these assemblages "clusters," we see them in the incipient stages of their consolidation. Their absolute consolidation is to come.

We have now reached a point from which we behold the Universe as a spherical space, interspersed, unequably, with clusters. It will be noticed

that I here prefer the adverb "unequably" to the phrase "with a merely general equability," employed before. It is evident, in fact, that the equability of distribution will diminish in the ratio of the agglomerative processes—that is to say, as the things distributed diminish in number. Thus the increase of inequability—an increase which must continue until, sooner or later, an epoch will arrive at which the largest agglomeration will absorb all the others—should be viewed as, simply, a corroborative indication of the tendency to One.

And here, at length, it seems proper to inquire whether the ascertained facts of Astronomy confirm the general arrangement which I have thus, deductively, assigned to the Heavens. Thoroughly, they do. Telescopic observation, guided by the laws of perspective, enables us to understand that the perceptible Universe exists as a cluster of clusters,

irregularly disposed.

The "clusters" of which this Universal "cluster of clusters" consists, are merely what we have been in the practice of designating "nebulæ"—and, of these "nebulæ," one is of paramount interest to mankind. I allude to the Galaxy, or Milky Way. This interests us, first and most obviously, on account of its great superiority in apparent size, not only to any one other cluster in the firmament, but to all the other clusters taken together. The largest of these latter occupies a mere point, comparatively, and is distinctly seen only with the aid of a telescope. The Galaxy sweeps throughout the Heaven and is brilliantly visible to the naked eye. But it interests man chiefly, although less immediately, on account of its being his home; the home of the Earth on which he exists: the home of the Sun about which this Earth revolves; the home of that "system" of

orbs of which the Sun is the centre and primarythe Earth one of sixteen secondaries, or planetsthe Moon one of seventeen tertiaries, or satellites. The Galaxy, let me repeat, is but one of the clusters which I have been describing—but one of the miscalled "nebulæ" revealed to us—by the telescope alone, sometimes—as faint hazy spots in various quarters of the sky. We have no reason to suppose the Milky Way really more extensive than the least of these "nebulæ." Its vast superiority in size is but an apparent superiority arising from our position in regard to it—that is to say, from our position in its midst. However strange the assertion may at first appear to those unversed in Astronomy, still the astronomer himself has no hesitation in asserting that we are in the midst of that inconceivable host of stars—of suns—of systems—which constitute the Galaxy. Moreover, not only have we-not only has our Sun a right to claim the Galaxy as its own especial cluster, but, with slight reservation, it may be said that all the distinctly visible stars of the firmament—all the stars visible to the naked eve have equally a right to claim it as their own.

There has been a great deal of misconception in respect to the *shape* of the Galaxy; which, in nearly all our astronomical treatises, is said to resemble that of a capital Y. The cluster in question has, in reality, a certain general—very general resemblance to the planet Saturn, with its encompassing triple ring. Instead of the solid orb of that planet, however, we must picture to ourselves a lenticular star-island, or collection of stars; our Sun lying excentrically—near the shore of the island—on that side of it which is nearest the constellation of the Cross and farthest from that of Cassiopeia. The surrounding ring, where it approaches our position,

has in it a longitudinal gash, which does, in fact, cause the ring, in our vicinity, to assume, loosely, the appearance of a capital Y.

We must not fall into the error, however, of conceiving the somewhat indefinite girdle as at all remote, comparatively speaking, from the also indefinite lenticular cluster which it surrounds; and thus, for mere purpose of explanation, we may speak of our Sun as actually situated at that point of the Y where its three component lines unite; and, conceiving this letter to be of a certain solidity—of a certain thickness, very trivial in comparison with its length —we may even speak of our position as in the middle of this thickness. Fancying ourselves thus placed, we shall no longer find difficulty in accounting for the phænomena presented—which are perspective altogether. When we look upward or downwardthat is so say, when we cast our eyes in the direction of the letter's thickness—we look through fewer stars than when we cast them in the direction of its length, or along either of the three component lines. Of course, in the former case, the stars appear scattered—in the latter, crowded.—To reverse this explanation:—An inhabitant of the Earth, when looking, as we commonly express ourselves, at the Galaxy, is then beholding it in some of the directions of its length—is looking along the lines of the Ybut when, looking out into the general Heaven, he turns his eyes from the Galaxy, he is then surveying it in the direction of the letter's thickness; and on this account the stars seem to him scattered; while, in fact, they are as close together, on an average, as in the mass of the cluster. No consideration could be better adapted to convey an idea of this cluster's stupendous extent.

If, with a telescope of high space-penetrating

power, we carefully inspect the firmament, we shall become aware of a belt of clusters—of what we have hitherto called "nebulæ"—a band, of varying breadth, stretching from horizon to horizon, at right angles to the general course of the Milky Way. This band is the ultimate cluster of clusters. This belt is The Universe. Our Galaxy is but one, and perhaps one of the most inconsiderable, of the clusters which go to the constitution of this ultimate. Universal belt or band. The appearance of this cluster of clusters, to our eyes, as a belt or band, is altogether a perspective phænomenon of the same character as that which causes us to behold our own individual and roughly-spherical cluster, the Galaxy, under guise also of a belt, traversing the Heavens at right angles to the Universal one. The shape of the all-inclusive cluster is, of course generally, that of each individual cluster which it includes. Just as the scattered stars which, on looking from the Galaxy, we see in the general sky are, in fact, but a portion of that Galaxy itself, and as closely intermingled with it as any of the telescopic points in what seems the densest portion of its mass so are the scattered "nebulæ" which, on casting our eyes from the Universal belt, we perceive at all points of the firmament—so, I say, are these scattered "nebulæ" to be understood as only perspectively scattered, and as part and parcel of the one supreme and Universal sphere.

No astronomical fallacy is more untenable, and none has been more pertinaciously adhered to, than that of the absolute *illimitation* of the Universe of Stars. The reasons for limitation, as I have already assigned them, à priori, seem to me unanswerable; but, not to speak of these, observation assures us that there is, in numerous directions around us,

certainly, if not in all, a positive limit—or, at the very least, affords us no basis whatever for thinking otherwise. Were the succession of stars endless, then the background of the sky would present us an uniform luminosity, like that displayed by the Galaxy-since there could be absolutely no point, in all that background, at which would not exist a star. The only mode, therefore, in which, under such a state of affairs, we could comprehend the voids which our telescopes find in innumerable directions, would be by supposing the distance of the invisible background so immense that no ray from it has yet been able to reach us at all. That this may be so, who shall venture to deny? I maintain, simply, that we have not even the shadow of a reason for believing that it is so.

When speaking of the vulgar propensity to regard all bodies on the Earth as tending merely to the Earth's centre, I observed that, "with certain exceptions to be specified hereafter, every body on the Earth tended not only to the Earth's centre, but in every conceivable direction besides."* The "exceptions" refer to those frequent gaps in the Heavens, where our utmost scrutiny can detect not only no stellar bodies, but no indications of their existence: where yawning chasms, blacker than Erebus, seem to afford us glimpses, through the boundary walls of the Universe of Stars, into the illimitable Universe of Vacancy, beyond. Now as any body, existing on the Earth, chances to pass, either through its own movement or the Earth's, into a line with any one of these voids, or cosmical abysses, it clearly is no longer attracted in the direction of that void, and for the moment, consequently, is "heavier" than at any period, either after or before. In-

^{*} Page 182.

dependently of the consideration of these voids, however, and looking only at the generally unequable distribution of the stars, we see that the absolute tendency of bodies on the Earth to the Earth's centre, is in a state of perpetual variation.

We comprehend, then, the insulation of our Universe. We perceive the isolation of that—of all that which we grasp with the senses. We know that there exists one cluster of clusters—a collection around which, on all sides, extend the immeasurable wildernesses of a Space to all human perception untenanted. But because upon the confines of this Universe of Stars we are compelled to pause, through want of farther evidence from the senses, is it right to conclude that, in fact, there is no material point beyond that which we have thus been permitted to attain? Have we, or have we not, an analogical right to the inference that this perceptible Universe —that this cluster of clusters—is but one of a series of clusters of clusters, the rest of which are invisible through distance—through the diffusion of their light being so excessive, ere it reaches us, as not to produce upon our retinas a light-impression—or from there being no such emanation as light at all, in these unspeakably distant worlds-or, lastly, from the mere interval being so vast, that the electric tidings of their presence in Space, have not yetthrough the lapsing myriads of years—been enabled to traverse that interval?

Have we any right to inferences—have we any ground whatever for visions such as these? If we have a right to them in any degree, we have a right to their infinite extension.

The human brain has obviously a leaning to the "Infinite," and fondles the phantom of the idea. It seems to long with a passionate fervor for this im-

possible conception, with the hope of intellectually believing it when conceived. What is general among the whole race of Man, of course no individual of that race can be warranted in considering abnormal; nevertheless, there may be a class of superior intelligences, to whom the human bias alluded to may wear all the character of monomania.

My question, however, remains unanswered:— Have we any right to infer—let us say, rather, to imagine—an interminable succession of the "clusters of clusters," or of "Universes" more or less similar?

I reply that the "right," in a case such as this, depends absolutely upon the hardihood of that imagination which ventures to claim the right. Let me declare, only, that, as an individual, I myself feel impelled to fancy—without daring to call it more—that there does exist a limitless succession of Universes, more or less similar to that of which we have cognizance—to that of which alone we shall ever have cognizance—at the very least until the return of our own particular Universe into Unity. If such clusters of clusters exist, however—and they do—it is abundantly clear that, having had no part in our origin, they have no portion in our laws. They neither attract us, nor we them. Their materialtheir sp it is not ours—is not that which obtains in any part of our Universe. They could not impress our senses or our souls. Among them and uscon idering all, for the moment, collectively—there are no influences in common. Each exists, apart and independently, in the bosom of its proper and particular God.

In the conduct of this Discourse, I am aiming less at physical than at metaphysical order. The clearness with which even material phænomena are presented to the understanding, depends very little, I have long since learned to perceive, upon a merely natural, and almost altogether upon a moral, arrangement. If then I seem to step somewhat too discursively from point to point of my topic, let me suggest that I do so in the hope of thus the better keeping unbroken that chain of graduated impression by which alone the intellect of Man can expect to encompass the grandeurs of which I speak, and, in their majestic totality, to comprehend them.

So far, our attention has been directed, almost exclusively, to a general and relative grouping of the stellar bodies in space. Of specification there has been little; and whatever ideas of quantity have been conveyed—that is to say, of number, magnitude, and distance—have been conveyed incidentally and by way of preparation for more definitive conceptions. These latter let us now attempt to entertain.

Our solar system, as has been already mentioned, consists, in chief, of one sun and sixteen planets certainly, but in all probability a few others, revolving around it as a centre, and attended by seventeen moons of which we know, with possibly several more of which as yet we know nothing. These various bodies are not true spheres, but oblate spheroids spheres flattened at the poles of the imaginary axes about which they rotate:—the flattening being a consequence of the rotation. Neither is the Sun absolutely the centre of the system; for this Sun itself, with all the planets, revolves about a perpetually shifting point of space, which is the system's general centre of gravity. Neither are we to consider the paths through which these different spheroids move—the moons about the planets, the planets about the Sun, or the Sun about the common centre

—as circles in an accurate sense. They are, in fact, ellipses—one of the foci being the point about which the revolution is made. An ellipse is a curve, returning into itself, one of whose diameters is longer than the other. In the longer diameter are two points, equidistant from the middle of the line, and so situated otherwise that if, from each of them a straight line be drawn to any one point of the curve, the two lines, taken together, will be equal to the long diameter itself. Now let us conceive such an ellipse. At one of the points mentioned, which are the foci, let us fasten an orange. By an elastic thread let us connect this orange with a pea; and let us place this latter on the circumference of the ellipse. Let us now move the pea continuously around the orange-keeping always on the circumference of the ellipse. The elastic thread, which, of course, varies in length as we move the pea, will form what in geometry is called a radius vector. Now, if the orange be understood as the Sun, and the pea as a planet revolving about it, then the revolution should be made at such a rate—with a velocity so varying—that the radius vector may pass over equal areas of space in equal times. The progress of the pea should be—in other words, the progress of the planet is, of course,—slow in proportion to its distance from the Sun-swift in proportion to its proximity. Those planets, moreover, move the more slowly which are the farther from the Sun; the squares of their periods of revolution having the same proportion to each other, as have to each other the cubes of their mean distances from the Sun.

The wonderfully complex laws of revolution here described, however, are not to be understood as obtaining in our system alone. They everywhere

prevail where Attraction prevails. They control the Universe. Every shining speck in the firmament is, no doubt, a luminous Sun, resembling our own, at least in its general features, and having in attendance upon it a greater or less number of planets, greater or less, whose still lingering luminosity is not sufficient to render them visible to us at so vast a distance, but which, nevertheless, revolve, moon-attended, about their starry centres, in obedience to the principles just detailed—in obedience to the three omniprevalent laws of revolution—the three immortal laws guessed by the imaginative Kepler, and but subsequently demonstrated and accounted for by the patient and mathematical Newton. Among a tribe of philosophers who pride themselves excessively upon matterof-fact, it is far too fashionable to sneer at all speculation under the comprehensive sobriquet, "guesswork." The point to be considered is, who guesses. In guessing with Plato, we spend our time to better purpose, now and then, than in harkening to a demonstration by Alcmaon.

In many works on Astronomy I find it distinctly stated that the laws of Kepler are the basis of the great principle, Gravitation. This idea must have arisen from the fact that the suggestion of these laws by Kepler, and his proving them à posteriori to have an actual existence, led Newton to account for them by the hypothesis of Gravitation, and, finally, to demonstrate them à priori, as necessary consequences of the hypothetical principle. Thus so far from the laws of Kepler being the basis of Gravity, Gravity is the basis of these laws—as it is, indeed, of all the laws, of the material Universe which are not referable to Repulsion alone.

The mean distance of the Earth from the Moon-

that is to say, from the heavenly body in our closest vicinity—is 237,000 miles. Mercury, the planet nearest the Sun, is distant from him 37 millions of miles. Venus, the next, revolves at a distance of 68 millions:—the Earth, which comes next, at a distance of 95 millions:-Mars, then, at a distance of 144 millions. Now come the eight Asteroids (Ceres, Juno, Vesta, Pallas, Astræa, Flora, Iris, and Hebe) at an average distance of about 250 millions. Then we have Jupiter, distant 490 millions; then Saturn, 900 millions; then Uranus, 19 hundred millions; finally Neptune, lately discovered, and revolving at a distance, say of 28 hundred millions. Leaving Neptune out of the account—of which as yet we know little accurately and which is, possibly, one of a system of Asteroids—it will be seen that, within certain limits, there exists an order of interval among the planets. Speaking loosely, we may say that each outer planet is twice as far from the Sun as is the next inner one. May not the order here mentioned—may not the law of Bode—be deduced from consideration of the analogy suggested by me as having placed between the solar discharge of rings and the mode of the atomic irradiation?

The numbers hurriedly mentioned in this summary of distance, it is folly to attempt comprehending, unless in the light of abstract arithmetical facts. They are not practically tangible ones. They convey no precise ideas. I have stated that Neptune, the planet farthest from the sun, revolves about him at a distance of 28 hundred millions of miles. So far good:—I have stated a mathematical fact; and, without comprehending it in the least, we may put it to use—mathematically. But in mentioning, even, that the Moon revolves about the Earth at the comparatively trifling distance of 237,000

miles, I entertained no expectation of giving any one to understand—to know—to feel—how far from the Earth the Moon actually is. 237,000 miles! There are, perhaps, few of my readers who have not crossed the Atlantic ocean; yet how many of them have a distinct idea of even the 3,000 miles intervening between shore and shore? I doubt, indeed, whether the man lives who can force into his brain the most remote conception of the interval between one milestone and its next neighbor upon the turnpike. We are in some meaure aided, however, in our consideration of distance, by combining this consideration with the kindred one of velocity. Sound passes through 1100 feet of space in a second of time. Now were it possible for an inhabitant of the Earth to see the flash of a cannon discharged in the Moon, and to hear the report, he would have to wait, after perceiving the former, more than 13 entire days and nights before getting any intimation of the latter.

However feeble be the impression, even thus conveyed, of the Moon's real distance from the Earth, it will, neverless, effect a good object in enabling us more clearly to see the futility of attempting to grasp such intervals as that of the 28 hundred millions of miles between our Sun and Neptune; or even that of the 95 millions between the Sun and the Earth we inhabit. A cannon-ball, flying at the greatest velocity with which such a ball has ever been known to fly, could not traverse the latter interval in less than 20 years; while for the former it would require 590.

Our Moon's real diameter is 2160 miles; yet she is comparatively so trifling an object that it would take nearly 50 such orbs to compose one as great as

the Earth.

The diameter of our own globe is 7912 miles—but from the enunciation of these numbers what positive idea do we derive?

If we ascend an ordinary mountain and look around us from its summit, we behold a landscape stretching, say 40 miles, in every direction; forming a circle 250 miles in circumference; and including an area of 5000 square miles. The extent of such a prospect, on account of the successiveness with which its portions necessarily present themselves to view, can be only very feebly and very partially appreciated:-yet the entire panorama would comprehend no more than one 40,000th part of the mere surface of our globe. Were this panorama, then, to be succeeded, after the lapse of an hour, by another of equal extent; this again by a third, after the lapse of an hour; this again by a fourth after lapse of another hour—and so on, until the scenery of the whole Earth were exhausted; and were we to be engaged in examining these various panoramas for twelve hours of every day; we should nevertheless, be q years and 48 days in completing the general survev.

But if the mere surface of the Earth eludes the grasp of the imagination, what are we to think of its cubical contents? It embraces a mass of matter equal in weight to at least two sextillions, two hundred quintillions of tons. Let us suppose it in a state of quiescence; and now let us endeavor to conceive a mechanical force sufficient to set it in motion! Not the strength of all the myriads of beings whom we may conclude to inhabit the planetary worlds of our system—not the combined physical strength of all these beings—even admitting all to be more powerful than man—would avail to stir the ponderous mass a single inch from its position.

What are we to understand, then, of the force, which under similar circumstances, would be required to move the largest of our planets, Jupiter? This is 86,000 miles in diameter, and would include within its periphery more than a thousand orbs of the magnitude of our own. Yet this stupendous body is actually flying around the sun at the rate of 29,000 miles an hour—that is to say, with a velocity forty times greater than that of a cannon-ball! The thought of such a phænomenon cannot well be said to startle the mind:—it palsies and appals it. Not unfrequently we task our imagination in picturing the capacities of an angel. Let us fancy such a being at a distance of some hundred miles from Jupiter—a close eye-witness of this planet as it speeds on its annual revolution. Now can we, I demand, fashion for ourselves any conception so distinct of this ideal being's spiritual exaltation, as that involved in the supposition that, even by this immeasurable mass of matter, whirled immediately before his eyes, with a velocity so unutterable, hean angel-angelic though he be-is not at once struck into nothingness and overwhelmed?

At this point, however, it seems proper to suggest that, in fact, we have been speaking of comparative trifles. Our Sun—the central and controlling orb of the system to which Jupiter belongs—is not only greater than Jupiter, but greater by far than all the planets of the system taken together. This fact is an essential condition, indeed, of the stability of the system itself. The diameter of Jupiter has been mentioned: it is 86,000 miles:—that of the Sun is 882,000 miles. An inhabitant of the latter, traveling ninety miles a day, would be more than eighty years in going round a great circle of its circumference. It occupies a cubical space of 681 quadrillions, 472 trillions of

miles. The Moon, as has been stated, revolves about the Earth at a distance of 237,000 miles—in an orbit, consequently, of nearly a million and a half. Now, were the Sun placed upon the Earth, centre over centre, the body of the former would extend, in every direction, not only to the line of the Moon's orbit, but beyond it, a distance of 200,000 miles.

And here, once again, let me suggest that, in fact, we have still been speaking of comparative trifles. The distance of the planet Neptune from the Sun has been stated: it is 28 hundred millions of miles: the circumference of its orbit, therefore, is about 17 billions. Let this be borne in mind while we glance at some one of the brightest stars. Between this and the star of our system, (the Sun,) there is a gulf of space, to convey any idea of which, we should need the tongue of an archangel. From our system, then, and from our Sun, or star, the star at which we suppose ourselves glancing is a thing altogether apart:-still, for the moment, let us imagine it placed upon our Sun, centre over centre, as we just now imagined this Sun itself placed upon the Earth. Let us now conceive the particular star we have in mind, extending, in every direction, beyond the orbit of Mercury—of Venus—of the Earth:—still on, beyond the orbit of Mars-of Jupiter-of Uranusuntil, finally, we fancy it filling the circle-seventeen billions of miles in circumference—which is described by the revolution of Leverrier's planet. When we have conceived all this, we shall have entertained no extravagant conception. There is the very best reason for believing that many of the stars are even far larger than the one we have imagined. I mean to say, that we have the very best empirical basis for such belief:—and, in looking back at the original, atomic arrangements for diversity, which have been

assumed as a part of the Divine plan in the constitution of the Universe, we shall be enabled easily to understand, and to credit, the existence of even far vaster disproportions in stellar size than any to which I have hitherto alluded. The largest orbs, of course, we must expect to find rolling through the widest vacancies of Space.

I remarked, just now, that to convey an idea of the interval between our Sun and any one of the other stars, we should require the eloquence of an archangel. In so saying, I should not be accused of exaggeration; for, in simple truth, these are topics on which it is scarcely possible to exaggerate. But let us bring the matter more distinctly before the eye of the mind.

In the first place, we may get a general, relative conception of the interval referred to, by comparing it with the inter-planetary spaces. If, for example, we suppose the Earth, which is, in reality, 95 millions of miles from the Sun, to be only one foot from that luminary; then Neptune would be forty feet distant; and the star Alpha Lyræ, at the very least, one hundred and fifty-nine.

Now I presume that, in the termination of my last sentence, few of my readers have noticed anything especially objectionable—particularly wrong. I said that the distance of the Earth from the Sun being taken at one foot, the distance of Neptune would be forty feet, and that of Alpha Lyræ, one hundred and fifty-nine. The proportion between one foot and one hundred and fifty nine, has appeared, perhaps, to convey a sufficiently definite impression of the proportion between the two intervals—that of the Earth from the Sun, and that of Alpha Lyræ from the same luminary. But my account of the matter should, in reality, have run thus:—The

distance of the Earth from the Sun being taken at one foot, the distance of Neptune would be forty feet, and that of Alpha Lyræ, one hundred and fifty-nine—miles:—that is to say, I had assigned to Alpha Lyræ, in my first statement of the case, only the 5280th part of that distance which is the least distance possible at which it can actually lie.

To proceed:—However distant a mere *planet* is, yet when we look at it through a telescope, we see it under a certain form—of a certain appreciable size. Now I have already hinted at the probable bulk of many of the stars; nevertheless, when we view any one of them, even through the most powerful telescope, it is found to present us with *no form*, and consequently with *no magnitude* whatever. We see it as a point, and nothing more.

Again:—Let us suppose ourselves walking, at night, on a highway. In a field on one side of the road, is a line of tall objects, say trees, the figures of which are distinctly defined against the background of the sky. This line of objects extends at right angles to the road, and from the road to the horizon. Now, as we proceed along the road, we see these objects changing their positions, respectively, in relation to a certain fixed point in that portion of the firmament which forms the background of the view. Let us suppose this fixed point—sufficiently fixed for our purpose—to be the rising moon. become aware, at once, that while the tree nearest us so far alters its position in respect to the moon, as to seem flying behind us, the tree in the extreme distance has scarcely changed at all its relative position with the satellite. We then go on to perceive that the farther the objects are from us, the less they alter their positions; and the converse. Then we begin, unwittingly, to estimate the distances of individual trees by the degrees in which they evince the relative alteration. Finally, we come to understand how it might be possible to ascertain the actual distance of any given tree in the line, by using the amount of relative alteration as a basis in a simple geometrical problem. Now, this relative alteration is what we call "parallax;" and by parallax we calculate the distances of the heavenly bodies. Applying the principle to the trees in question, we should, of course, be very much at a loss to comprehend the distance of that tree, which, however far we proceeded along the road, should evince no parallax at all. This, in the case described, is a thing impossible; but impossible only because all distances on our Earth are trivial indeed:-in comparison with the vast cosmical quantities, we may speak of them as absolutely nothing.

Now, let us suppose the Star Alpha Lyræ directly overhead; and let us imagine that, instead of standing on the Earth, we stand at one end of a straight road stretching through Space to a distance equalling the diameter of the Earth's orbit—that is to say, to a distance of one hundred and ninety millions of miles. Having observed, by means of the most delicate micrometrical instruments, the exact position of the star, let us now pass along this inconceivable road, until we reach the other extremity. Now, once again, let us look at the star. It is precisely where we left it. Our instruments, however delicate, assure us that its relative position is absolutely—is identically the same, as at the commencement of our unutterable journey. No parallax—none whatever—has been found.

The fact is, that, in regard to the distance of the fixed stars—of any one of the myriads of suns glistening on the farther side of that awful chasm

which separates our system from its brothers in the cluster to which it belongs-astronomical science, until very lately, could speak only with a negative certainty. Assuming the brightest as the nearest, we could say, even of them, only that there is a certain incomprehensible distance on the hither side of which they cannot be:-how far they are beyond it we had in no case been able to ascertain. We perceived, for example, that Alpha Lyræ cannot be nearer to us than 19 trillions, 200 billions of miles; but, for all we knew, and indeed for all we now know, it may be distant from us the square, or the cube, or any other power of the number mentioned. By dint, however, of wonderfully minute and cautious observations, continued, with novel instruments, for many laborious years, Bessel, not long ago deceased. has lately succeeded in determining the distance of six or seven stars; among others, that of the star numbered 61 in the constellation of the Swan. The distance in this latter instance ascertained, is 670,ooo times that of the Sun; which last it will be remembered, is 95 millions of miles. The star 61 Cygni, then, is nearly 64 trillions of miles from us or more than three times the distance assigned, as the least possible, for Alpha Lyra,

In attempting to appreciate this interval by the aid of any considerations of velocity, as we did in endeavoring to estimate the distance of the moon, we must leave out of sight, altogether, such nothings as the speed of a cannon ball, or of sound. Light, however, according to the latest calculations of Struve, proceeds at the rate of 167,000 miles in a second. Thought itself cannot pass through this interval more speedily—if, indeed, thought can traverse it at all. Yet, in coming from 61 Cygni to us, even at this inconceivable rate, light occupies more

than ten years; and, consequently, were the star this moment blotted out from the Universe still, for ten years, would it continue to sparkle on, undimmed

in its paradoxical glory.

Keeping now in mind whatever feeble conception we may have attained of the interval between our Sun and 61 Cygni, let us remember that this interval, however unutterably vast, we are permitted to consider as but the *average* interval among the countless host of stars composing that cluster, or "nebula," to which our system, as well as that of 61 Cygni, belongs. I have, in fact, stated the case with great moderation:—we have excellent reason for believing 61 Cygni to be one of the *nearest* stars, and thus for concluding, at least for the present, that its distance from us is *less* than the average distance between star and star in the magnificent cluster of the Milky Way.

And here, once again and finally, it seems proper to suggest that even as yet we have been speaking of trifles. Ceasing to wonder at the space between star and star in our own or in any particular cluster, let us rather turn our thoughts to the intervals between cluster and cluster, in the all-comprehensive cluster of the Universe.

I have already said that light proceeds at the rate of 167,000 miles in a second—that is, about 10 millions of miles in a minute, or about 600 millions of miles in an hour:—yet so far removed from us are some of the "nebulæ" that even light, speeding with this velocity, could not and does not reach us, from those mysterious regions, in less than 3 millions of years. This calculation, moreover, is made by the elder Herschel, and in reference merely to those comparatively proximate clusters within the scope of his own telescope. There are "nebulæ," however, which, through the magical tube of Lord Rosse, are

this instant whispering in our ears the secrets of a million of ages by-gone. In a word, the events which we behold now-at this moment-in those worlds—are the identical events which interested their inhabitants ten hundred thousand centuries ago. In intervals—in distances such as this suggestion forces upon the soul—rather than upon the mind we find, at length, a fitting climax to all hitherto frivolous considerations of quantity.

Our fancies thus occupied with the cosmical distances, let us take the opportunity of referring to the difficulty which we have so often experienced, while pursuing the beaten path of astronomical reflection, in accounting for the immeasurable voids alluded to—in comprehending why chasms so totally unoccupied and therefore apparently so needless, have been made to intervene between star and starbetween cluster and cluster—in understanding, to be brief, a sufficient reason for the Titanic scale, in respect of mere Space, on which the Universe is seen to be constructed. A rational cause for the phænomenon, I maintain that Astronomy has palpably failed to assign:-but the considerations through which, in this Essay, we have proceeded step by step, enable us clearly and immediately to perceive that Space and Duration are one. That the Universe might endure throughout an æra at all commensurate with the grandeur of its component material portions and with the high majesty of its spiritual purposes, it was necessary that the original atomic diffusion be made to so inconceivable an extent as to be only not infinite. It was required, in a word, that the stars should be gathered into visibility from invisible nebulosity—proceed from nebulosity to consolidation—and so grow grey in giving birth and death to unspeakably numerous and complex variations of vitalic development:—it was required that the stars should do all this—should have time thoroughly to accomplish all these Divine purposes—during the period in which all things were effecting their return into Unity with a velocity accumulating in the inverse proportion of the squares of the distances at which lay the inevitable End.

Throughout all this we have no difficulty in understanding the absolute accuracy of the Divine adaptation. The density of the stars, respectively, proceeds, of course, as their condensation diminishes; condensation and heterogeneity keep pace with each other; through the latter, which is the index of the former, we estimate the vitalic and spiritual development. Thus, in the density of the globes, we have the measure in which their purposes are fulfilled. As density proceeds—as the divine intentions are accomplished—as less and still less remains to be accomplished—so—in the same ratio—should we expect to find an acceleration of the End;—and thus the philosophical mind will easily comprehend that the Divine designs in constituting the stars, advance mathematically to their fulfilment:—and more; it will readily give the advance a mathematical expression; it will decide that this advance is inversely proportional with the squares of the distances of all created things from the starting-point and goal of their creation.

Not only is this Divine adaptation, however, mathematically accurate, but there is that about it which stamps it as divine, in distinction from that which is merely the work of human constructiveness. I allude to the complete mutality of adaptation. For example; in human constructions a particular cause has a particular effect; a particular intention brings to pass a particular object; but this is all; we see no

reciprocity. The effect does not re-act upon the cause; the intention does not change relations with the object. In Divine constructions the object is either design or object as we choose to regard it—and we may take at any time a cause for an effect, or the converse—so that we can never absolutely decide which is which.

To give an instance:—In polar climates the human frame, to maintain its animal heat, requires, for combustion in the capillary system, an abundant supply of highly azotized food, such as train-oil. But again:—in polar climates nearly the sole food afforded man is the oil of abundant seals and whales. Now, whether is oil at hand because imperatively demanded, or the only thing demanded because the only thing to be obtained? It is impossible to decide. There is an absolute reciprocity of adaptation.

The pleasure which we derive from any display of human ingenuity is in the ratio of the approach to this species of reciprocity. In the construction of plot, for example, in fictitious literature, we should aim at so arranging the incidents that we shall not be able to determine, of any one of them, whether it depends from any one other or upholds it. In this sense, of course, perfection of plot is really, or practically, unattainable—but only because it is a finite intelligence that constructs. The plots of God are perfect. The Universe is a plot of God.

And now we have reached a point at which the intellect is forced, again, to struggle against its propensity for analogical inference—against its monomaniac grasping at the infinite. Moons have been seen *revolving* about planets; planets about stars; and the poetical instinct of humanity—its instinct of the symmetrical, if the symmetry be but a symmetry of surface:—this *instinct*, which the

Soul, not only of Man but of all created beings, took up, in the beginning, from the geometrical basis of the Universal irradiation—impels us to the fancy of an endless extension of this system of cycles. Closing our eyes equally to deduction and induction, we insist upon imagining a revolution of all the orbs of the Galaxy about some gigantic globe which we take to be the central pivot of the whole. Each cluster in the great cluster of clusters is imagined, of course, to be similarly supplied and constructed; while, that the "analogy" may be wanting at no point, we go on to conceive these clusters themselves, again, as revolving about some still more august sphere; -this latter, still again, with its encircling clusters, as but one of a yet more magnificent series of agglomerations, gyrating about yet another orb central to themsome orb still more unspeakably sublime—some orb, let us rather say, of infinite sublimity endlessly multiplied by the infinitely sublime. Such are the conditions, continued in perpetuity, which the voice of what some people term "analogy" calls upon the Fancy to depict and the Reason to contemplate. if possible, without becoming dissatisfied with the picture. Such, in general, are the interminable gyrations beyond gyration which we have been instructed by Philosophy to comprehend and to account for, at least in the best manner we can. Now and then, however, a philosopher proper—one whose frenzy takes a very determinate turn—whose genius, to speak more reverentially, has a strongly pronounced washer-womanish bias, doing everything up by the dozen-enables us to see precisely that point out of sight, at which the revolutionary processes in question do, and of right ought to, come to an end.

It is hardly worth while, perhaps, even to sneer at

the reveries of Fourrier:—but much has been said, latterly, of the hypothesis of Mädler—that there exists, in the centre of the Galaxy, a stupendous globe about which all the systems of the cluster revolve. The *period* of our own, indeed, has been stated—117 millions of years,

That our Sun has a motion in space, independently of its rotation, and revolution about the system's centre of gravity, has long been suspected. This motion, granting it to exist, would be manifested perspectively. The stars in that firmamental region which we were leaving behind us, would, in a very long series of years, become crowded; those in the opposite quarter, scattered. Now, by means of astronomical History, we ascertain, cloudily, that some such phænomena have occurred. On this ground it has been declared that our system is moving to a point in the heavens diametrically opposite the star Zeta Herculis:-but this inference is, perhaps, the maximum to which we have any logical right. Mädler, however, has gone so far as to designate a particular star, Alcyone in the Pleiades, as being at or about the very spot around which a general revolution is performed.

Now, since by "analogy" we are led, in the first instance, to these dreams, it is no more than proper that we should abide by analogy, at least in some measure, during their development; and that analogy which suggests the revolution, suggests at the same time a central orb about which it should be performed:—so far the astronomer was consistent. This central orb, however, should, dynamically, be greater than all the orbs, taken together, which surround it. Of these there are about 100 millions. "Why, then," it was of course demanded, "do we not see this vast central sun—at least equal in mass to

100 millions of such suns as ours—why do we not see it—we, especially, who occupy the mid region of the cluster—the very locality near which, at all events, must be situated this incomparable star?" The reply was ready—"It must be non-luminous, as are our planets." Here, then, to suit a purpose, analogy is suddenly let fall. "Not so," it may be said— "we know that non-luminous suns actually exist." It is true that we have reason at least for supposing so; but we have certainly no reason whatever for supposing that the non-luminous suns in question are encircled by luminous suns, while these again are surrounded by non-luminous planets:—and it is precisely all this with which Mädler is called upon to find any thing analogous in the heavens—for it is precisely all this which he imagines in the case of the Galaxy. Admitting the thing to be so, we cannot help here picturing to ourselves how sad a puzzle the why is it so must prove to all à priori philosophers.

But granting, in the very teeth of analogy and of everything else, the non-luminosity of the vast central orb, we may still inquire how this orb, so enormous, could fail of being rendered visible by the flood of light thrown upon it from the 100 millions of glorious suns glaring in all directions about it. Upon the urging of this question, the idea of an actually solid central sun appears, in some measure. to have been abandoned; and speculation proceeded to assert that the systems of the cluster perform their revolutions merely about an immaterial centre of gravity common to all. Here again then, to suit a purpose, analogy is let fall. The planets of our system revolve, it is true, about a common centre of gravity; but they do this in connexion with, and in consequence of, a material sun whose mass more than counterbalances the rest of the system.

The mathematical circle is a curve composed of an infinity of straight lines. But this idea of the circle—an idea which, in view of all ordinary geometry, is merely the mathematical, as contradistinguished from the practical, idea—is, in sober fact. the practical conception which alone we have any right to entertain in regard to the majestic circle with which we have to deal, at least in fancy, when we suppose our system revolving about a point in the centre of the Galaxy. Let the most vigorous of human imaginations attempt but to take a single step towards the comprehension of a sweep so ineffable! It would scarcely be parodoxical to say that a flash of lightning itself, travelling forever upon the circumference of this unutterable circle, would still, forever, be travelling in a straight line. That the path of our Sun in such an orbit would, to any human perception, deviate in the slightest degree from a straight line, even in a million of years, is a proposition not to be entertained:—yet we are required to believe that a curvature has become apparent during the brief period of our astronomical history—during a mere point—during the utter nothingness of two or three thousand years.

It may be said that Mädler has really ascertained a curvature in the direction of our system's now well-established progress through Space. Admitting, if necessary, this fact to be in reality such, I maintain that nothing is thereby shown except the reality of this fact—the fact of a curvature. For its thorough determination, ages will be required; and, when determined, it will be found indicative of some binary or other multiple relation between our Sun and some one or more of the proximate stars. I hazard nothing however, in predicting, that, after the lapse of many centuries, all efforts at determining the

path of our Sun through Space, will be abandoned as fruitless. This is easily conceivable when we look at the infinity of perturbation it must experience, from its perpetually-shifting relations with other orbs, in the common approach of all to the nucleus of the

Galaxy.

But in examining other "nebulæ" than that of the Milky Way—in surveying, generally, the clusters which overspread the heavens—do we or do we not find confirmation of Mädler's hypothesis? We do not. The forms of the clusters are exceedingly diverse when casually viewed; but on close inspection through powerful telescopes, we recognise the sphere, very distinctly, as at least the proximate form of all:—their constitution, in general, being at variance with the idea of revolution about a common centre.

"It is difficult," says Sir John Herschel, "to form any conception of the dynamical state of such systems. On one hand, without a rotary motion and a centrifugal force, it is hardly possible not to regard them as in a state of progressive collapse. On the other, granting such a motion and such a force, we find it no less difficult to reconcile their forms with the rotation of the whole system [meaning cluster] around any single axis, without which internal collision would appear to be inevitable."

Some remarks lately made about the "nebulæ" by Dr. Nichol, in taking quite a different view of the cosmical conditions from any taken in this Discourse—have a very peculiar applicability to the point now

at issue. He says:

"When our greatest telescopes are brought to bear upon them, we find that those which were thought to be irregular, are not so; they approach nearer to a globe. Here is one that looked oval; but Lord Rosse's telescope brought it into a circle. . . . Now

there occurs a very remarkable circumstance in reference to these comparatively sweeping circular masses of nebulæ. We find they are not entirely circular, but the reverse; and that all around them, on every side, there are volumes of stars, stretching out apparently as if they were rushing towards a great central mass in consequence of the action of some great power."*

Were I to describe, in my own words, what must necessarily be the existing condition of each nebula on the hypothesis that all matter is, as I suggest, now returning to its original Unity, I should simply be going over, nearly verbatim, the language here employed by Dr. Nichol, without the faintest suspicion of that stupendous truth which is the key to these nebular phænomena.

And here let me fortify my position still farther, by the voice of a greater than Mädler—of one, moreover, to whom all the data of Mädler have long been familiar things, carefully and thoroughly considered. Referring to the elaborate calculations of Argelander—the very researches which form Mädler's basis—Humboldt, whose generalizing powers have never, perhaps, been equalled, has the following observation:

"When we regard the real, proper, or non-perspective motions of the stars, we find many groups of them moving in opposite directions; and the data as yet in hand render it not necessary, at least, to conceive that the systems composing the Milky Way, or the clusters, generally, composing the Universe, are revolving about any particular centre unknown, whether luminous or nonluminous. It is but Man's

^{*} I must be understood as denying, especially, only the revolutionary portion of Mädler's hypothesis. Of course, if no great central orb exists now in our cluster, such will exist hereafter. Whenever existing, it will be merely the nucleus of the consolidation.

longing for a fundamental First Cause, that impels both his intellect and fancy to the adoption of such

an hypothesis."*

The phænomenon here alluded to—that of "many groups moving in opposite directions"-is quite inexplicable by Mädler's idea; but arises, as a necessary consequence, from that which forms the basis of this Discourse. While the merely general direction of each atom-of each moon, planet, star, or cluster —would, on my hypothesis, be, of course, absolutely rectilinear, while the general path of all bodies would be a right line leading to the centre of all; it is clear, nevertheless, that this general rectilinearity would be compounded of what, with scarcely any exaggeration, we may term an infinity of particular curves—an infinity of local deviations from rectilinearity—the result of continuous differences of relative position among the multitudinous masses, as each proceeded on its own proper journey to the End.

I quoted, just now, from Sir John Herschel, the following words, used in reference to the clusters:— "On one hand, without a rotary motion and a centrifugal force, it is hardly possible not to regard them as in a state of *progressive collapse*." The fact is, that, in surveying the "nebulæ" with a telescope of high power, we shall find it quite impossible, having once conceived this idea of "collapse," not to

^{*} Betrachtet man die nicht perspectivischen eigenen Bewegungen der Sterne, so scheinen viele gruppenweise in ihrer Richtung entgegengesetzt; und die bisher gesammelten Thatsachen machen es auf's wenigste nicht nothwendig, anzunehmen, dass alle Theile unserer Sternenschicht oder gar der gesammten Sterneninseln, welche den Weltraum füllen, sich um einen grossen, unbekannten, leuchtenden oder, dunkeln Centralkörper bewegen. Das Streben nach den letzten und höchsten Grundursachen macht freilich die reflectirende Thätigkeit des Menschen, wie seine Phantasie, zu einer solchen Annahme geneigt.

gather, at all points, corroboration of the idea. A nucleus is always apparent, in the direction of which the stars seem to be precipitating themselves; nor can these nuclei be mistaken for merely perspective phænomena:—the clusters are really denser near the centre—sparser in the regions more remote from it. In a word, we see every thing as we should see it were a collapse taking place; but, in general, it may be said of these clusters, that we can fairly entertain, while looking at them, the idea of orbital movement about a centre, only by admitting the possible existence, in the distant domains of space, of dynamical laws with which we are unacquainted.

On the part of Herschel, however, there is evidently a reluctance to regard the nebulæ as in "a state of progressive collapse." But if facts—if even appearances justify the supposition of their being in this state, why, it may well be demanded, is he disinclined to admit it? Simply on account of a prejudice;—merely because the supposition is at war with a pre-conceived and utterly baseless notion—that of the endlessness—that of the eternal stability of the Uinverse.

If the propositions of this Discourse are tenable, the "state of progressive-collapse" is precisely that state in which alone we are warranted in considering All Things; and, with due humility, let me here confess that, for my part, I am at a loss to conceive how any other understanding of the existing condition of affairs, could ever have made its way into the human brain. "The tendency to collapse" and "the attraction of gravitation" are convertible phrases. In using either, we speak of the reaction of the First Act. Never was necessity less obvious than that of supposing Matter imbued with an ineradicable quality forming part of its material nature—a

quality, or instinct, forever inseparable from it, and by dint of which inalienable principle every atom is perpetually impelled to seek its fellow-atom. Never was necessity less obvious than that of entertaining this unphilosophical idea. Going boldly behind the vulgar thought, we have to conceive, metaphysically, that the gravitating principle appertains to Matter temporarily—only while diffused—only while existing as Many instead of as One-appertains to it by virtue of its state of irradiation alone—appertains, in a word, altogether to its condition, and not in the slightest degree to itself. In this view, when the irradiation shall have returned into its source—when the reaction shall be completed—the gravitating principle will no longer exist. And, in fact, astronomers, without at any time reaching the idea here suggested, seem to have been approximating it, in the assertion that "if there were but one body in the universe, it would be impossible to understand how the principle, Gravity, could obtain": that is to say, from a consideration of Matter as they find it, they reach a conclusion at which I deductively arrive. That so pregnant a suggestion as the one quoted should have been permitted to remain so long unfruitful, is, nevertheless, a mystery which I find it difficult to fathom.

It is, perhaps, in no little degree, however, our propensity for the continuous—for the analogical—in the present case more particularly for the symmetrical—which has been leading us astray. And, in fact, the sense of the symmetrical is an instinct which may be depended upon with an almost blindfold reliance. It is the poetical essence of the Universe—of the Universe which, in the supremeness of its symmetry, is but the most sublime of poems. Now symmetry and consistency are convertible

terms:—thus Poetry and Truth are one. A thing is consistent in the ratio of its truth—true in the ratio of its consistency. A perfect consistency, I repeat, can be nothing but an absolute truth. We may take it for granted, then, that Man cannot long or widely err, if he suffer himself to be guided by this poetical, which I have maintained to be his truthful, in being his symmetrical, instinct. He must have a care, however, lest, in pursuing too heedlessly the superficial symmetry of forms and motions, he leave out of sight the really essential symmetry of the principles which determine and control them.

That the stellar bodies would finally be merged in one—that, at last, all would be drawn into the substance of one stupendous central orb already existing is an idea which, for some time past, seems, vaguely and indeterminately, to have held possession of the fancy of mankind. It is an idea, in fact, which belongs to the class of the excessively obvious. It springs, instantly, from a superficial observation of the cyclic and seemingly gyrating or vortical movements of those individual portions of the Universe which come most immediately and most closely under our observation. There is not, perhaps, a human being, of ordinary education and of average reflective capacity, to whom, at some period, the fancy in question has not occurred, as if spontaneously, or intuitively, and wearing all the character of a very profound and very original conception. This conception, however, so commonly entertained, has never, within my knowledge, arisen out of any abstract considerations. Being, on the contrary, always suggested, as I say, by the vortical movements about centres, a reason for it, also,—a cause for the ingathering of all the orbs into one, imagined to be already existing, was naturally sought in the

same direction—among these cyclic movements themselves.

Thus it happened that, on announcement of the gradual and perfectly regular decrease observed in the orbit of Encke's comet, at every successive revolution about our Sun, astronomers were nearly unanimous in the opinion that the cause in question was found—that a principle was discovered sufficient to account, physically, for that final, universal agglomeration which, I repeat, the analogical, symmetrical, or poetical instinct of man had predetermined to understand as something more than a simple hypothesis.

This cause—this sufficient reason for the final ingathering—was declared to exist in an exceedingly rare but still material medium pervading space; which medium, by retarding, in some degree, the progress of the comet, perpetually weakened its tangential force; thus giving a predominance to the centripetal; which, of course, drew the comet nearer and nearer at each revolution, and would eventually

precipitate it upon the Sun.

All this was strictly logical—admitting the medium of ether; but this ether was assumed, most illogically, on the ground that no other mode than the one spoken of could be discovered, of accounting for the observed decrease in the orbit of the comet:—as if from the fact that we could discover no other mode of accounting for it, it followed, in any respect, that no other mode of accounting for it existed. It is clear that innumerable causes might operate, in combination, to diminish the orbit, without even a possibility of our ever becoming acquainted with one of them. In the meantime, it has never been fairly shown, perhaps, why the retardation occasioned by the skirts of the Sun's atmosphere, through which

the comet passes at perihelion, is not enough to account for the phænomenon. That Encke's comet will be absorbed into the Sun, is probable; that all the comets of the system will be absorbed, is more than merely possible; but, in such cases, the principle of absorption must be referred to eccentricity of orbit—to the close approximation to the Sun, of the comets at their perihelia; and is a principle not affecting, in any degree, the ponderous spheres, which are to be regarded as the true material constituents of the Universe. Touching comets in general, let me here suggest, in passing, that we cannot be far wrong in looking upon them as the lightning-flashes of the cosmical Heaven.

The idea of a retarding ether, and, through it, of a final agglomeration of all things, seemed at one time, however, to be confirmed by the observation of a positive decrease in the orbit of the solid moon. By reference to eclipses recorded 2500 years ago, it was found that the velocity of the satellite's revolution then was considerably less than it is now; that on the hypothesis that its motions in its orbit is uniformly in accordance with Kepler's law, and was accurately determined then-2500 years ago-it is now in advance of the position it should occupy, by nearly 9000 miles. The increase of velocity proved, of course, a diminution of orbit; and astronomers were fast yielding to a belief in an ether, as the sole mode of accounting for the phænomenon, when Lagrange came to the rescue. He showed that, owing to the configurations of the spheroids, the shorter axes of their ellipses are subject to variation in length; the longer axes being permanent; and that this variation is continuous and vibratory—so that every orbit is in a state of transition, either from circle to ellipse, or from ellipse to circle. In the case

of the moon, where the shorter axis is decreasing, the orbit is passing from circle to ellipse, and, consequently, is decreasing too; but, after a long series of ages, the ultimate eccentricity will be attained; then the shorter axis will proceed to increase, until the orbit becomes a circle; when the process of shortening will again take place;—and so on forever. In the case of the Earth, the orbit is passing from ellipse to circle. The facts thus demonstrated do away, of course, with all necessity for supposing an ether, and with all apprehension of the system's instability—on the ether's account.

It will be remembered that I have myself assumed what we may term an ether. I have spoken of a subtle influence which we know to be ever in attendance upon matter, although becoming manifest only through matter's heterogeneity. To this influence—without daring to touch it at all in any effort at explaining its awful nature—I have referred the various phænomena of electricity, heat, light, magnetism; and more—of vitality, consciousness, and thought—in a word, of spirituality. It will be seen, at once, then, that the ether thus conceived is radically distinct from the ether of the astronomers; inasmuch as theirs is matter and mine not.

With the idea of material ether, seems, thus, to have departed altogether the thought of that universal agglomeration so long predetermined by the poetical fancy of mankind:—an agglomeration in which a sound Philosophy might have been warranted in putting faith, at least to a certain extent, if for no other reason than that by this poetical fancy it had been so predetermined. But so far as Astronomy—so far as mere Physics have yet spoken, the cycle of the Universe has no conceivable end. Had an end been demonstrated, however, from so

purely collateral a cause as an ether, Man's instinct of the Divine capacity to adapt, would have rebelled against the demonstration. We should have been forced to regard the Universe with some such sense of dissatisfaction as we experience in contemplating an unnecessarily complex work of human art. Creation would have affected us as an imperfect plot in a romance, where the dénoûment is awkwardly brought about by interposed incidents external and foreign to the main subject; instead of springing out of the bosom of the thesis—out of the heart of the ruling idea—instead of arising as a result of the primary proposition—as inseparable and inevitable part and parcel of the fundamental conception of the book.

What I mean by the symmetry of mere surface will now be more clearly understood. It is simply by the blandishment of this symmetry that we have been beguiled into the general idea of which Mädler's hypothesis is but a part—the idea of the vortical indrawing of the orbs. Dismissing this nakedly physical conception, the symmetry of principle sees the end of all things metaphysically involved in the thought of a beginning; seeks and finds in this origin of all things the *rudiment* of this end; and perceives the impiety of supposing this end likely to be brought about less simply—less directly—less obviously—less artistically—than through the reaction of the originating Act.

Recurring, then, to a previous suggestion, let us understand the systems—let us understand each star, with its attendant planets—as but a Titanic atom existing in space with precisely the same inclination for Unity which characterized, in the beginning, the actual atoms after their irradiation throughout the Universal sphere. As these original

atoms rushed towards each other in generally straight lines, so let us conceive as at least generally rectilinear, the paths of the system-atoms towards their respective centres of aggregation:—and in this direct drawing together of the systems into clusters, with a similar and simultaneous drawing together of the clusters themselves while undergoing consolidation, we have at length attained the great *Now*—the awful Present—the Existing Condition of the Universe.

Of the still more awful Future a not irrational analogy may guide us in framing an hypothesis. The equilibrium between the centripetal and centrifugal forces of each system, being necessarily destroyed upon attainment of a certain proximity to the nucleus of the cluster to which it belongs, there must occur, at once, a chaotic or seemingly chaotic precipitation, of the moons upon the planets, of the planets upon the suns, and of the suns upon the nuclei; and the general result of this precipitation must be the gathering of the myriad now-existing stars of the firmament into an almost infinitely less number of almost infinitely superior spheres. being immeasurably fewer, the worlds of that day will be immeasurably greater than our own. Then, indeed, amid unfathomable abysses, will be glaring unimaginable suns. But all this will be merely a climactic magnificence foreboding the great End. Of this End the new genesis described, can be but a very partial postponement. While undergoing consolidation, the clusters themselves, with a speed prodigiously accumulative, have been rushing towards their own general centre—and now, with a thousandfold electric velocity, commensurate only with their material grandeur and with the spiritual passion of their appetite for oneness, the majestic remnants of the tribe of Stars flash, at length, into a common embrace. The inevitable catastrophe is at hand.

But this catastrophe—what is it? We have seen accomplished the ingathering of the orbs. Henceforward, are we not to understand one material globe of globes as constituting and comprehending the Universe? Such a fancy would be altogether at war with every assumption and consideration of this Discourse.

I have already alluded to that absolute reciprocity of adaptation which is the idiosyncrasy of the divine Art—stamping it divine. Up to this point of our reflections, we have been regarding the electrical influence as a something by dint of whose repulsion alone Matter is enabled to exist in that state of diffusion demanded for the fulfilment of its purposes: —so far, in a word, we have been considering the influence in question as ordained for Matter's sake to subserve the objects of matter. With a perfectly legitimate reciprocity, we are now permitted to look at Matter, as created solely for the sake of this influence—solely to serve the objects of this spiritual Ether. Through the aid—by the means—through the agency of Matter, and by dint of its heterogeneity —is this Ether manifested—is Spirit individualized. It is merely in the development of this Ether, through heterogeneity, that particular masses of Matter become animate—sensitive—and in the ratio of their heterogeneity; -some reaching a degree of sensitiveness involving what we call Thought, and thus attaining Conscious Intelligence.

In this view, we are enabled to perceive Matter as a Means—not as an End. Its purposes are thus seen to have been comprehended in its diffusion; and with the return into Unity these purposes cease. The absolutely consolidated globe of globes would be objectless:—therefore not for a moment could it continue to exist. Matter, created for an end, would unquestionably, on fulfilment of that end, be Matter no longer. Let us endeavor to understand that it would disappear, and that God would remain all in all.

That every work of Divine conception must coexist and coexpire with its particular design, seems to me especially obvious; and I make no doubt that, on perceiving the final globe of globes to be objectless, the majority of my readers will be satisfied with my "therefore it cannot continue to exist." Nevertheless, as the startling thought of its instantaneous disappearance is one which the most powerful intellect cannot be expected readily to entertain on grounds so decidedly abstract, let us eddeavor to look at the idea from some other and more ordinary point of view:—let us see how thoroughly and beautifully it is corroborated in an à posteriori consideration of Matter as we actually find it.

I have before said that "Attraction and Repulsion being undeniably the sole properties by which Matter is manifested to Mind, we are justified in assuming that Matter exists only as Attraction and Repulsion—in other words that Attraction and Repulsion are Matter; there being no conceivable case in which we may not employ the term Matter and the terms 'Attraction' and 'Repulsion' taken together, as equivalent, and therefore convertible, expressions of Logic."*

Now the very definition of Attraction implies particularity—the existence of parts, particles, or atoms; for we define it as the tendency of "each atom &c. to every other atom," &c. according to a certain law. Of course where there are no parts—where there is absolute Unity—where the tendency to oneness is satisfied—there can be no Attraction—

^{*}Page 159.

this has been fully shown, and all Philosophy admits it. When, on fulfilment of its purposes, then, Matter shall have returned into its original conditions of One—a condition which presupposes the expulsion of the separative ether, whose province and whose capacity are limited to keeping the atoms apart until that great day when, this ether being no longer needed, the overwhelming pressure of the finally collective Attraction shall at length just sufficiently predominate* and expel it:-when, I say, Matter, finally, expelling the Ether, shall have returned into absolute Unity,—it will then (to speak paradoxically for the moment) be Matter without Attraction and without Repulsion—in other words, Matter without Matter—in other words, again, Matter no more. sinking into Unity, it will sink at once into that Nothingness which, to all Finite Perception, Unity must be-into that Material Nihility from which alone we can conceive it to have been evoked—to have been created by the Volition of God.

I repeat, then—Let us endeavor to comprehend that the final globe of globes will instantaneously disappear, and that God will remain all in all.

But are we here to pause? Not so. On the Universal agglomeration and dissolution, we can readily conceive that a new and perhaps totally different series of conditions may ensue—another creation and irradiation, returning into itself—another action and reaction of the Divine Will. Guiding our imaginations by that omniprevalent law of laws, the law of periodicity, are we not, indeed, more than justified in entertaining a belief—let us say rather, in indulging a hope—that the processes we have here ventured to contemplate will be renewed

^{*&}quot;Gravity, therefore, must be the strongest of forces."—See page 161.

forever, and forever, and forever; a novel Universe swelling into existence, and then subsiding into nothingness, at every throb of the Heart Divine?

And now—this Heart Divine—what is it? It is

our own.

Let not the merely seeming irreverence of this idea frighten our souls from that cool exercise of consciousness—from that deep tranquillity of self-inspection—through which alone we can hope to attain the presence of this, the most sublime of truths, and look it leisurely in the face.

The phænomena on which our conclusions must at this point depend, are merely spiritual shadows, but

not the less thoroughly substantial.

We walk about, amid the destinies of our world-existence, encompassed by dim but ever present *Memories* of a Destiny more vast—very distant in the by-gone time, and infinitely awful.

We live out a Youth peculiarly haunted by such dreams; yet never mistaking them for dreams. As Memories we know them. During our Youth the distinction is too clear to deceive us even for a moment.

So long as this Youth endures, the feeling that we exist, is the most natural of all feelings. We understand it thoroughly. That there was a period at which we did not exist—or, that it might so have happened that we never had existed at all—are the considerations, indeed, which during this youth, we find difficulty in understanding. Why we should not exist, is, up to the epoch of our Manhood, of all queries the most unanswerable. Existence—self-existence—existence from all Time and to all Eternity—seems, up to the epoch of Manhood, a normal and unquestionable condition:—seems, because it is.

But now comes the period at which a conventional

World-Reason awakens us from the truth of our dream. Doubt, Surprise and Incomprehensibility arrive at the same moment. They say:—"You live, and the time was when you lived not. You have been created. An Intelligence exists greater than your own; and it is only through this Intelligence you live at all." These things we struggle to comprehend and cannot:—cannot, because these things, being untrue, are thus, of necessity, incomprehensible.

No thinking being lives who, at some luminous point of his life of thought, has not felt himself lost amid the surges of futile efforts at understanding or believing, that anything exists greater than his own soul. The utter impossibility of any one's soul feeling itself inferior to another; the intense, overwhelming dissatisfaction and rebellion at the thought; —these, with the omniprevalent aspirations at perfection, are but the spiritual, coincident with the material, struggles towards the original Unity—are, to my mind at least, a species of proof far surpassing what Man terms demonstration, that no one soul is inferior to another—that nothing is, or can be, superior to any one soul—that each soul is, in part, its own God-its own Creator:-in a word, that God—the material and spiritual God—now exists solely in the diffused Matter and Spirit of the Universe; and that the regathering of this diffused Matter and Spirit will be but the re-constitution of the purely Spiritual and Individual God.

In this view, and in this view alone, we comprehend the riddles of Divine Injustice—of Inexorable Fate. In this view alone the existence of Evil becomes intelligible; but in this view it becomes more—it becomes endurable. Our souls no longer rebel at a *Sorrow* which we ourselves have imposed upon

ourselves, in furtherance of our own purposes—with a view—if even with a futile view—to the ex-

tension of our own Joy.

I have spoken of *Memories* that haunt us during our youth. They sometimes pursue us even in our Manhood:—assume gradually less and less indefinite shapes:—now and then speak to us with low voices,

saying:

'There was an epoch in the Night of Time, when a still-existent Being existed—one of an absolutely infinite number of similar Beings that people the absolutely infinite domains of the absolutely infinite space.* It was not and is not in the power of this Being-any more than it is in your own-to extend, by actual increase, the joy of his Existence; but just as it is in your power to expand or to concentrate your pleasures (the absolute amount of happiness remaining always the same) so did and does a similar capability appertain to this Divine Being, who thus passes his Eternity in perpetual variation of Concentrated Self and almost Infinite Self-Diffusion. What you call The Universe is but his present expansive existence. He now feels his life through an infinity of imperfect pleasures—the partial and pain-intertangled pleasures of those inconceivably numerous things which you designate as his creatures, but which are really but infinite individualizations of Himself. All these creaturesall—those which you term animate, as well as those to whom you deny life for no better reason than that you do not behold it in operation—all these creatures have, in a greater or less degree, a capacity for pleasure and for pain:—but the general sum of their sensations is precisely that amount of Happiness

^{*} See page 221, paragraph commencing "I reply that the right," and ending "proper and particular God."

which appertains by right to the Divine Being when concentrated within Himself. These creatures are all too, more or less conscious Intelligences: conscious. first, of a proper identity; conscious, secondly, and by faint indeterminate glimpses, of an identity with the Divine Being of whom we speak—of an identity with God. Of the two classes of consciousness, fancy that the former will grow weaker, the latter stronger. during the long succession of ages which must elapse before these myriads of individual Intelligences become blended—when the bright stars become blended—into One. Think that the sense of individual identity will be gradually merged in the general consciousness—that Man, for example, ceasing imperceptibly to feel himself Man, will at length attain that awfully triumphant epoch when he shall recognise his existence as that of Jehovah. In the meantime bear in mind that all is Life—Life— Life within Life—the less within the greater, and all within the Spirit Divine.

THE RATIONALE OF VERSE

HE word "Verse" is here used not in its strict or primitive sense, but as the term most convenient for expressing generally and without pedantry all that is involved in the consideration of

rhythm, rhyme, metre, and versification.

There is, perhaps, no topic in polite literature which has been more pertinaciously discussed, and there is certainly not one about which so much inaccuracy, confusion, misconception, misrepresentation, mystification, and downright ignorance on all sides, can be fairly said to exist. Were the topic really difficult, or did it lie, even, in the cloud-land of metaphysics, where the doubt-vapors may be made to assume any and every shape at the will or at the fancy of the gazer, we should have less reason to wonder at all this contradiction and perplexity; but in fact the subject is exceedingly simple; one tenth of it, possibly, may be called ethical; nine tenths, however, appertain to the mathematics; and the whole is included within the limits of the commonest common sense.

"But, if this is the case, how," it will be asked, "can so much misunderstanding have arisen? It is conceivable that a thousand profound scholars, investigating so very simple a matter for centuries, have not been able to place it in the fullest light, at least, of which it is susceptible?" These queries, I confess, are not easily answered:—at all events, a satisfactory reply to them might cost more trouble than would, if properly considered, the whole vexata quæstio to which they have reference. Nevertheless,

there is little difficulty or danger in suggesting that the "thousand profound scholars" may have failed, first, because they were scholars, secondly, because they were profound, and thirdly, because they were a thousand—the impotency of the scholarship and profundity having been thus multiplied a thousand fold. I am serious in these suggestions; for, first again, there is something in "scholarship" which seduces us into blind worship of Bacon's Idol of the Theatre—into irrational deference to antiquity; secondly, the proper "profundity" is rarely profoundit is the nature of Truth in general, as of some ores in particular, to be richest when most superficial; thirdly, the clearest subject may be overclouded by mere superabundance of talk. In chemistry, the best way of separating two bodies is to add a third; in speculation, fact often agrees with fact and argument with argument, until an additional wellmeaning fact or argument sets every thing by the ears. In one case out of a hundred a point is excessively discussed because it is obscure; in the ninetynine remaining it is obscure because excessively discussed. When a topic is thus circumstanced, the readiest mode of investigating it is to forget that any previous investigation has been attempted.

But, in fact, while much has been written on the Greek and Latin rhythms, and even on the Hebrew, little effort has been made at examining that of any of the modern tongues. As regards the English, comparatively nothing has been done. It may be said, indeed, that we are without a treatise on our own verse. In our ordinary grammars and in our works on rhetoric or prosody in general, may be found occasional chapters, it is true, which have the heading, "Versification," but these are, in all instances, exceedingly meagre. They pretend to no

analysis; they propose nothing like system; they make no attempt at even rule; every thing depends upon "authority." They are confined, in fact, to mere exemplification of the supposed varieties of English feet and English lines;—although in no work with which I am acquainted are these feet correctly given nor these lines detailed in anything like their full extent. Yet what has been mentioned is all-if we except the occasional introduction of some pedagogue-ism, such as this, borrowed from the Greek Prosodies: "When a syllable is wanting, the verse is said to be catalectic; when the measure is exact, the line is acatalectic; when there is a redundant syllable it forms hypermeter." Now whether a line be termed catalectic or acatalectic is, perhaps, a point of no vital importance;—it is even possible that the student may be able to decide, promptly, when the a should be employed and when omitted, yet be incognizant, at the same time, of all that is worth knowing in regard to the structure of verse.

A leading defect in each of our treatises, (if treatises they can be called,) is the confining the subject to mere Versification, while Verse in general, with the understanding given to the term in the heading of this paper, is the real question at issue. Nor am I aware of even one of our Grammars which so much as properly defines the word versification itself. "Versification," says a work now before me, of which the accuracy is far more than usual—the "English Grammar" of Goold Brown-"Versification is the art of arranging words into lines of correspondent length, so as to produce harmony by the regular alternation of syllables differing in quantity." The commencement of this definition might apply, indeed, to the art of versification, but not versification itself. Versification is not the art of arranging, &c.,

but the actual arranging—a distinction too obvious to need comment. The error here is identical with one which has been too long permitted to disgrace the initial page of every one of our school grammars. I allude to the definitions of English Grammar itself. "English Grammar," it is said, "is the art of speaking and writing the English language correctly." This phraseology, or something essentially similar, is employed, I believe, by Bacon, Miller, Fisk, Greenleaf, Ingersoll, Kirkland, Cooper, Flint, Pue, Comly and many others. These gentlemen, it is presumed, adopted it without examination from Murray, who derived it from Lily, (whose work was "quam solam Regia Majestas in omnibus scholis docendam pracipit,") and who appropriated it without acknowledgment, but with some unimportant modification, from the Latin Grammar of Leonicenus. It may be shown, however, that this definition, so complacently received, is not, and cannot be, a proper definition of English Grammar. A definition is that which so describes its object as to distinguish it from all others:—it is no definition of any one thing if its terms are applicable to any one other. But if it be asked—"What is the design—the end—the aim of English Grammar?" our obvious answer is, "The art of speaking and writing the English language correctly:"—that is to say, we must use the precise words employed as the definition of English Grammar itself. But the object to be obtained by any means is, assuredly, not the means. English Grammar and the end contemplated by English Grammar, are two matters sufficiently distinct; nor can the one be more reasonably regarded as the other than a fishing-hook as a fish. The definition, therefore, which is applicable in the latter instance, cannot, in the former, be true. Grammar in general is the analysis of language; English

Grammar of the English.

But to return to Versification as defined in our extract above. "It is the art," says the extract, "of arranging words into lines of correspondent length." Not so:—a correspondence in the length of lines is by no means essential. Pindaric odes are, surely, instances of versification, yet these compositions are noted for extreme diversity in the length of their lines.

The arrangement is moreover said to be for the purpose of producing "harmony by the regular alternation," &c. But harmony is not the sole aim—not even the principal one. In the construction of verse, melody should never be left out of view; yet this is a point which all our Prosodies have most unaccountably forborne to touch. Reasoned rules on this topic should form a portion of all systems of

rhythm.

"So as to produce harmony," says the definition, "by the regular alternation," &c. A regular alternation, as described, forms no part of any principle of versification. The arrangement of spondees and dactyls, for example, in the Greek hexameter, is an arrangement which may be termed at random. At least it is arbitrary. Without interference with the line as a whole, a dactyl may be substituted for a spondee, or the converse, at any point other than the ultimate and penultimate feet, of which the former is always a spondee, the latter nearly always a dactyl. Here, it is clear, we have no "regular alternation of syllables differing in quantity."

"So as to produce harmony," proceeds the definition, "by the regular alternation of syllables differing in quantity,"—in other words by the alternation of long and short syllables; for in rhythm all syllables are necessarily either short or long. But not only do I deny the necessity of any regularity in the succession of feet and, by consequence, of syllables, but dispute the essentiality of any alternation, regular or irregular, of syllables long and short. Our author, observe, is now engaged in a definition of versification in general, not of English versification in particular. But the Greek and Latin metres abound in the spondee and pyrrhic—the former consisting of two long syllables; the latter of two short; and there are innumerable instances of the immediate succession of many spondees and many pyrrhics.

Here is a passage from Silius Italicus:

Fallis te mensas inter quod credis inermem Tot bellis quæsita viro, tot cædibus armat Majestas eterna ducem: si admoveris ora Cannas et Trebium ante oculos Trasymenaque busta, Et Pauli stare ingentem miraberis umbram.

Making the elisions demanded by the classic Prosodies, we should scan these Hexameters thus:

Fāllîs | tē mēn—sās in | tēr qūod | crēdǐs ĭn | ērmēm | Tōt bēl—līs qūæ | sītā vǐ | rō tōt—cædǐbŭs | ārmāt | Mājēs | tās ē | tērnā dǔ | cēm s'ād | mōvěrĭs | ōrā | Cānnās | ēt Trěbǐ' | ānt'ŏcǔ | lōs Trǎsy | mēnǎqǔe | būstā ēt Pāu | lī stā | r'ingēn | tēm mī | rāběrĭs | ūmbrām |

It will be seen that, in the first and last of these lines, we have only two short syllables in thirteen, with an uninterrupted succession of no less than nine long syllables. But how are we to reconcile all this with a definition of versification which describes it as "the art of arranging words into lines of correspondent length so as to produce harmony by the regular alternation of syllables differing in quantity?"

It may be urged, however, that our prosodist's intention was to speak of the English metres alone,

and that, by omitting all mention of the spondee and pyrrhic he has virtually avowed their exclusion from our rhythms. A grammarian is never excusable on the ground of good intentions. We demand from him, if from any one, rigorous precision of style. But grant the design. Let us admit that our author, following the example of all authors on English Prosody, has, in defining versification at large, intended a definition merely of the English. All these prosodists, we will say, reject the spondee and pyrrhic. Still all admit the iambus, which consists of a short syllable followed by a long; the trochee, which is the converse of the iambus; the dactyl, formed of one long syllable followed by two short; and the anapæst-two short succeeded by a long. The spondee is improperly rejected, as I shall presently show. The pyrrhic is rightfully dismissed. Its existence in either ancient or modern rhythm is purely chimerical, and the insisting on so perplexing a nonentity as a foot of two short syllables, affords, perhaps, the best evidence of the gross irrationality and subservience to authority which characterize our Prosody. In the meantime the acknowledged dactyl and anapæst are enough to sustain my proposition about the "alternation," &c., without reference to feet which are assumed to exist in the Greek and Latin metres alone: for an anapæst and a dactyl may meet in the same line; when of course we shall have an uninterrupted succession of four short syllables. The meeting of these two feet, to be sure, is an accident not contemplated in the definition now discussed; for this definition, in demanding a "regular alternation of syllables differing in quantity," insists on a regular succession of similar feet. But here is an example:

Sing to me | Isabelle,

This is the opening line of a little ballad now before me, which proceeds in the same rhythm—a peculiarly beautiful one. More than all this:— English lines are often well composed, entirely, of a regular succession of syllables all of the same quantity:—the first lines, for instance, of the following quatrain by Arthur C. Coxe:

March! march! march!

Making sounds as they tread,
Ho! ho! how they step,
Going down to the dead!

The line italicised is formed of three cæsuras. The cæsura, of which I have much to say hereafter, is rejected by the English Prosodies and grossly misrepresented in the classic. It is a perfect foot—the most important in all verse—and consists of a single long syllable; but the length of this syllable varies.

It has thus been made evident that there is not one point of the definition in question which does not involve an error. And for anything more satisfactory or more intelligible we shall look in vain to any

published treatise on the topic.

So general and so total a failure can be referred only to radical misconception. In fact the English Prosodists have blindly followed the pedants. These latter, like les moutons de Panurge, have been occupied in incessant tumbling into ditches, for the excellent reason that their leaders have so tumbled before. The Iliad, being taken as a starting point, was made to stand instead of Nature and common sense. Upon this poem, in place of facts and deduction from fact, or from natural law, were built systems of feet, metres, rhythms, rules,—rules that contradict each other every five minutes, and for nearly all of which there may be found twice as many

exceptions as examples. If any one has a fancy to be thoroughly confounded—to see how far the infatuation of what is termed "classical scholarship" can lead a book-worm in the manufacture of darkness out of sunshine, let him turn over, for a few moments, any of the German Greek Prosodies. The only thing clearly made out in them is a very magnificent contempt for Liebnitz's principle of "a sufficient reason."

To divert attention from the real matter in hand by any farther reference to these works, is unnecessarv, and would be weak. I cannot call to mind, at this moment, one essential particular of information that is to be gleaned from them; and I will drop them here with merely this one observation: that, employing from among the numerous "ancient" feet the spondee, the trochee, the iambus, the anapæst, the dactyl, and the cæsura alone, I will engage to scan correctly any of the Horatian rhythms, or any true rhythm that human ingenuity can conceive. And this excess of chimerical feet is, perhaps, the very least of the scholastic supererogations. Ex uno disce omnia. The fact is that Quantity is a point in whose investigation the lumber of mere learning may be dispensed with, if ever in any. Its appreciation is universal. It appertains to no region, nor race, nor æra in especial. To melody and to harmony the Greeks hearkened with ears precisely similar to those which we employ for similar purposes at present; and I should not be condemned for heresy in asserting that a pendulum at Athens would have vibrated much after the same fashion as does a pendulum in the city of Penn.

Verse originates in the human enjoyment of equality, fitness. To this enjoyment, also, all the

moods of verse—rhythm, metre, stanza, rhyme, alliteration, the *refrain*, and other analogous effects—are to be referred. As there are some readers who habitually confound rhythm and metre, it may be as well here to say that the former concerns the *character* of feet (that is, the arrangements of syllables) while the latter has to do with the *number* of these feet. Thus by "a dactylic *rhythm*" we express a sequence of dactyls. By "a dactylic hexa*meter*" we imply a line or measure consisting of six of these dactyls.

To return to equality. Its idea embraces those of similarity, proportion, identity, repetition, and adaptation or fitness. It might not be very difficult to go even behind the idea of equality, and show both how and why it is that the human nature takes pleasure in it, but such an investigation would, for any purpose now in view, be supererogatory. It is sufficient that the fact is undeniable—the fact that man derives enjoyment from his perception of equality. Let us examine a crystal. We are at once interested by the equality between the sides and between the angles of one of its faces: the equality of the sides pleases us; that of the angles doubles the pleasure. On bringing to view a second face in all respects similar to the first, this pleasure seems to be squared; on bringing to view a third it appears to be cubed, and so on. I have no doubt, indeed, that the delight experienced, if measurable, would be found to have exact mathematical relations such as I suggest; that is to say, as far as a certain point, beyond which there would be a decrease in similar relations.

The perception of pleasure in the equality of sounds is the principle of Music. Unpractised ears can appreciate only simple equalities, such as are

found in ballad airs. While comparing one simple sound with another they are too much occupied to be capable of comparing the equality subsisting between these two simple sounds, taken conjointly, and two other similar simple sounds taken conjointly. Practised ears, on the other hand, appreciate both equalities at the same instant—although it is absurd to suppose that both are heard at the same instant. One is heard and appreciated from itself: the other is heard by the memory; and the instant glides into and is confounded with the secondary, appreciation. Highly cultivated musical taste in this manner enjoys not only these double equalities, all appreciated at once, but takes pleasurable cognizance, through memory, of equalities the members of which occur at intervals so great that the uncultivated taste loses them altogether. That this latter can properly estimate or decide on the merits of what is called scientific music, is of course impossible. But scientific music has no claim to intrinsic excellence it is fit for scientific ears alone. In its excess it is the triumph of the physique over the morale of music. The sentiment is overwhelmed by the sense. On the whole, the advocates of the simpler melody and harmony have infinitely the best of the argument;-although there has been very little of real argument on the subject.

In verse, which cannot be better designated than as an inferior or less capable Music, there is, happily, little chance for complexity. Its rigidly simple character not even Science—not even Pedantry

can greatly pervert.

The rudiment of verse may, possibly, be found in the *spondee*. The very germ of a thought seeking satisfaction in equality of sound, would result in the construction of words of two syllables, equally accented. In corroboration of this idea we find that spondees most abound in the most ancient tongues. The second step we can easily suppose to be the comparison, that is to say, the collocation, of two spondees—of two words composed each of a spondee. The third step would be the juxta-position of three of these words. By this time the perception of monotone would induce farther consideration: and thus arises what Leigh Hunt so flounders in discussing under the title of "The Principle of Variety in Uniformity." Of course there is no principle in the case nor in maintaining it. The "Uniformity" is the principle:—the "Variety" is but the principle's natural safeguard from self-destruction by excess of self. "Uniformity," besides, is the very worst word that could have been chosen for the expression of the general idea at which it aims.

The perception of monotone having given rise to an attempt at its relief, the first thought in this new direction would be that of collating two or more words formed each of two syllables differently accented (that is to say, short and long) but having the same order in each word:—in other terms, of collating two or more iambuses, or two or more trochees. And here let me pause to assert that more pitiable nonsense has been written on the topic of long and short syllables than on any other subject under the sun. In general, a syllable is long or short, just as it is difficult or easy of enunciation. The natural long syllables are those encumbered—the natural short syllables are those unencumbered, with consonants; all the rest is mere artificiality and jargon. The Latin Prosodies have a rule that "a vowel before two consonants is long." This rule is deduced from "authority"—that is, from the observation that vowels so circumstanced, in the ancient poems, are

always in syllables long by the laws of scansion. The philosophy of the rule is untouched, and lies simply in the physical difficulty of giving voice to such syllables—of performing the lingual evolutions necessary for their utterance. Of course, it is not the vowel that is long, (although the rule says so) but the syllable of which the vowel is a part. It will be seen that the length of a syllable, depending on the facility or difficulty of its enunciation, must have great variation in various syllables; but for the purposes of verse we suppose a long syllable equal to two short ones:-and the natural deviation from this relativeness we correct in perusal. The more closely our long syllables approach this relation with our short ones, the better, ceteris paribus, will be our verse: but if the relation does not exist of itself, we force it by emphasis, which can, of course, make any syllable as long as desired:—or, by an effort we can pronounce with unnatural brevity a syllable that is naturally too long. Accented syllables are of course always long-but, where unencumbered with consonants, must be classed among the unnaturally long. Mere custom has declared that we shall accent them—that is to say, dwell upon them; but no inevitable lingual difficulty forces us to do so. In fine, every long syllable must of its own accord occupy in its utterance, or must be made to occupy. precisely the time demanded for two short ones. The only exception to this rule is found in the cæsura-of which more anon.

The success of the experiment with the trochees or iambuses (the one would have suggested the other) must have led to a trial of dactyls or anapæsts—natural dactyls or anapæsts—dactylic or anapæstic words. And now some degree of complexity has been attained. There is an appreciation, first, of the

equality between the several dactyls, or anapæsts, and, secondly, of that between the long syllable and the two short conjointly. But here it may be said, that step after step would have been taken, in continuation of this routine, until all the feet of the Greek Prosodies became exhausted. Not so:these remaining feet have no existence except in the brains of the scholiasts. It is needless to imagine men inventing these things, and folly to explain how and why they invented them, until it shall be first shown that they are actually invented. All other "feet" than those which I have specified, are, if not impossible at first view, merely combinations of the specified; and, although this assertion is rigidly true, I will, to avoid misunderstanding, put it in a somewhat different shape. I will say, then, that at present I am aware of no rhythm—nor do I believe that any one can be constructed—which, in its last analysis, will not be found to consist altogether of the feet I have mentioned, either existing in their individual and obvious condition, or interwoven with each other in accordance with simple natural laws which I will endeavor to point out hereafter.

We have now gone so far as to suppose men constructing indefinite sequences of spondaic, iambic, trochaic, dactylic, or anapæstic words. In extending these sequences, they would be again arrested by the sense of monotone. A succession of spondees would immediately have displeased; one of iambuses or of trochees, on account of the variety included within the foot itself, would have taken longer to displease; one of dactyls or anapæsts, still longer: but even the last, if extended very far, must have become wearisome. The idea, first, of curtailing, and, secondly, of defining the length of, a sequence, would thus at once have arisen. Here then is the

line, or verse proper.* The principle of equality being constantly at the bottom of the whole process, lines would naturally be made, in the first instance, equal in the number of their feet; in the second instance, there would be variation in the mere number; one line would be twice as long as another; then one would be some less obvious multiple of another; then still less obvious proportions would be adopted:
—nevertheless there would be proportion, that is to say, a phase of equality, still.

Lines being once introduced, the necessity of distinctly defining these lines to the ear, (as yet written verse does not exist,) would lead to a scrutiny of their capabilities at their terminations:—and now would spring up the idea of equality in sound between the final syllables—in other words, of rhyme. First, it would be used only in the iambic, anapæstic, and spondaic rhythms, (granting that the latter had not been thrown aside, long since, on account of its tameness;) because in these rhythms, the concluding syllable being long, could best sustain the necessary protraction of the voice. No great while could elapse, however, before the effect, found pleasant as well as useful, would be applied to the two remaining rhythms. But as the chief force of rhyme must lie in the accented syllable, the attempt to create rhyme at all in these two remaining rhythms. the trochaic and dactylic, would necessarily result in double and triple rhymes, such as beauty with duty (trochaic,) and beautiful with dutiful (dactylic.)

It must be observed, that in suggesting these proc-

^{*} Verse, from the Latin vertere, to turn, is so called on account of the turning or re-commencement of the series of feet. Thus a verse, strictly speaking, is a line. In this sense, however, I have preferred using the latter word alone; employing the former in the general acceptation given it in the heading of this paper.

esses, I assign them no date; nor do I even insist upon their order. Rhyme is supposed to be of modern origin, and were this proved, my positions remain untouched. I may say, however, in passing, that several instances of rhyme occur in the "Clouds" of Aristophanes, and that the Roman poets occasionally employ it. There is an effective species of ancient rhyming which has never descended to the moderns: that in which the ultimate and penultimate syllables rhyme with each other. For example:

Parturiunt montes et nascitur ridiculus mus.

And again:

Litoreis ingens inventa sub ilicibus sus.

The terminations of Hebrew verse, (as far as understood,) show no signs of rhyme; but what thinking person can doubt that it did actually exist? That men have so obstinately and blindly insisted, in general, even up to the present day, in confining rhyme to the ends of lines, when its effect is even better applicable elsewhere, intimates, in my opinion, the sense of some necessity in the connexion of the end with the rhyme-hints that the origin of rhyme lay in a necessity which connected it with the end-shows that neither mere accident nor mere fancy gave rise to the connexion—points, in a word, at the very necessity which I have suggested, (that of some mode of defining lines to the ear,) as the true origin of rhyme. Admit this, and we throw the origin far back in the night of Time-beyond the origin of written verse.

But, to resume. The amount of complexity I have now supposed to be attained, is very considerable. Various systems of equalization are appreciated at once (or nearly so) in their respective values and in the value of each system with reference to all the others. As our present *ultimatum* of complexity, we have arrived at triple-rhymed, natural-dactylic lines, existing proportionally as well as equally with regard to other triple-rhymed, natural-dactylic lines. For example:

Virginal Lilian, rigidly, humblily dutiful; Saintlily, lowlily, Thrillingly, holily Beautiful!

Here we appreciate, first, the absolute equality between the long syllable of each dactyl and the two short conjointly; secondly, the absolute equality between each dactyl and any other dactyl-in other words, among all the dactyls; thirdly, the absolute equality between the two middle lines; fourthly, the absolute equality between the first line and the three others taken conjointly; fifthly, the absolute equality between the last two syllables of the respective words "dutiful" and "beautiful"; sixthly, the absolute equality between the two last syllables of the respective words "lowlily" and "holily"; seventhly, the proximate equality between the first syllable of "dutiful" and the first syllable of "beautiful"; eighthly, the proximate equality between the first syllable of "lowlily" and that of "holily"; ninthly, the proportional equality (that of five to one,) between the first line and each of its members. the dactyls; tenthly, the proportional equality (that of two to one,) between each of the middle lines and its members, the dactyls; eleventhly, the proportional equality between the first line and each of the two middle—that of five to two; twelfthly, the proportional equality between the first line and the last —that of five to one; thirteenthly, the proportional equality between each of the middle lines and the last—that of two to one; lastly, the proportional equality, as concerns number, between all the lines, taken collectively and any individual line—that of four to one.

The consideration of this last equality would give birth immediately to the idea of stanza*—that is to say, the insulation of lines into equal or obviously proportional masses. In its primitive (which was also its best) form, the stanza would most probably have had absolute unity. In other words, the removal of any one of its lines would have rendered it imperfect; as in the case above, where, if the last line, for example, be taken away, there is left no rhyme to the "dutiful" of the first. Modern stanza is excessively loose—and where so, ineffective, as a matter of course.

Now, although in the deliberate written statement which I have here given of these various systems of equalities, there seems to be an infinity of complexity—so much that it is hard to conceive the mind taking cognizance of them all in the brief period occupied by the perusal or recital of the stanza—vet the difficulty is in fact apparent only when we will it to become so. Any one fond of mental experiment may satisfy himself, by trial, that, in listening to the lines, he does actually (although with a seeming unconsciousness, on account of the rapid evolutions of sensation,) recognise and instantaneously appreciate (more or less intensely as his ear is cultivated,) each and all of the equalizations detailed. The pleasure received, or receivable, has very much such progressive increase, and in very nearly such mathematical relations, as those which I have suggested in the case of the crystal.

^{*} A stanza is often vulgarly, and with gross impropriety, called a verse.

It will be observed that I speak of merely a proximate equality between the first syllable of "dutiful" and that of "beautiful;" and it may be asked why we cannot imagine the earliest rhymes to have had absolute instead of proximate equality of sound. But absolute equality would have involved the use of identical words; and it is the duplicate sameness or monotony—that of sense as well as that of sound—which would have caused these rhymes to be rejected in the very first instance.

The narrowness of the limits within which verse composed of natural feet alone, must necessarily have been confined, would have led, after a very brief interval, to the trial and immediate adoption of artificial feet—that is to say, of feet not constituted each of a single word, but two or even three words; or of parts of words. These feet would be intermingled with natural ones. For example:

ă brēath | căn māke | thěm ās | ă breath | hăs māde.
This is an iambic line in which each iambus is formed of two words. Again:

The un | ı̃mā | gı̃nā | ble might | of Jove.

This is an iambic line in which the first foot is formed of a word and a part of a word; the second and third, of parts taken from the body or interior of a word; the fourth, of a part and a whole; the fifth, of two complete words. There are no *natural* feet in either line. Again.

Cān ĭt bĕ | fānciĕd thặt | Dēĭty | ēvĕr vĭn | dīctĭvely Māde ĭn hĭs | īmăge ă | mānnĭkĭn | mĕrely tŏ | māddĕn ĭt?

These are two dactylic lines in which we find natural feet, ("Deity," "mannikin";) feet composed of two words ("fancied that," "image a," "merely to," "madden it";) feet composed of three words ("can it be," "made in his";) a foot composed

of a part of a word ("dictively";) and a foot composed of a word and a part of a word ("ever vin.")

And now, in our supposititious progress, we have gone so far as to exhaust all the essentialities of verse. What follows may, strictly speaking, be regarded as embellishment merely—but even in this embellishment, the rudimental sense of equality would have been the never-ceasing impulse. It would, for example, be simply in seeking farther administration to this sense that men would come, in time, to think of the refrain, or burden, where, at the close of the several stanzas of a poem, one word or phrase is repeated; and of alliteration, in whose simplest form a consonant is repeated in the commencements of various words. This effect would be extended so as to embrace repetitions both of vowels and of consonants, in the bodies as well as in the beginnings of words; and, at a later period, would be made to infringe on the province of rhyme, by the introduction of general similarity of sound between whole feet occurring in the body of a line:—all of which modifications I have exemplified in the line above,

Made in his image a mannikin merely to madden it. Farther cultivation would improve also the refrain by relieving its monotone in slightly varying the phrase at each repetition, or, (as I have attempted to do in "The Raven,") in retaining the phrase and varying its application—although this latter point is not strictly a rhythmical effect alone. Finally, poets when fairly wearied with following precedent—following it the more closely the less they perceived it in company with Reason—would adventure so far as to indulge in positive rhyme at other points than the ends of lines. First, they would put it in the middle of the line; then at some point where the multiple would be less obvious; then, alarmed at

their own audacity, they would undo all their work by cutting these lines in two. And here is the fruitful source of the infinity of "short metre," by which modern poetry, if not distinguished, is at least disgraced. It would require a high degree, indeed, both of cultivation and of courage, on the part of any versifier, to enable him to place his rhymes—and let them remain—at unquestionably their best position, that of unusual and unanticipated intervals.

On account of the stupidity of some people, or, (if talent be a more respectable word,) on account of their talent for misconception—I think it necessary to add here, first, that I believe the "processes" above detailed to be nearly if not accurately those which did occur in the gradual creation of what we now call verse; secondly, that, although I so believe, I yet urge neither the assumed fact nor my belief in it, as a part of the true propositions of this paper; thirdly, that in regard to the aim of this paper, it is of no consequence whether these processes did occur either in the order I have assigned them, or at all; my design being simply, in presenting a general type of what such processes might have been and must have resembled, to help them, the "some people," to an easy understanding of what I have farther to say on the topic of Verse.

There is one point which, in my summary of the processes, I have purposely forborne to touch; because this point, being the most important of all, on account of the immensity of error usually involved in its consideration, would have led me into a series of detail inconsistent with the object of a summary.

Every reader of verse must have observed how seldom it happens that even any one line proceeds uniformly with a succession, such as I have supposed, of absolutely equal feet; that is to say, with a suc-

cession of iambuses only, or of trochees only, or of dactyls only, or of anapæsts only, or of spondees only. Even in the most musical lines we find the succession interrupted. The iambic pentameters of Pope, for example, will be found on examination, frequently varied by trochees in the beginning, or by (what seem to be) anapæsts in the body, of the line.

ŏh thōu | whătē | vĕr tī | tlĕ pleāse | thĭne eār | Dĕan Drā | piĕr Bīck | ĕrstāff | ŏr Gūl | ĭvēr Whēthĕr | thŏu choōse | Cĕrvān | tĕs' sē | rĭoŭs āir | ŏr laūgh | ănd shāke | ĭn Rāb | ĕlaĭs' eā | sy chaīr. |

Were any one weak enough to refer to the Prosodies for the solution of the difficulty here, he would find it *solved* as usual by a *rule*, stating the fact, (or what it, the rule, supposes to be the fact,) but without the slightest attempt at the *rationale*. "By a *synæresis* of the two short syllables," say the books, "an anapæst may sometimes be employed for an iambus, or a dactyl for a trochee. . . . In the beginning of a line a trochee is often used for an iambus."

Blending is the plain English for synæresis—but there should be no blending; neither is an anapæst ever employed for an iambus, or a dactyl for a trochee. These feet differ in time; and no feet so differing can ever be legitimately used in the same line. An anapæst is equal to four short syllables—an iambus only to three. Dactyls and trochees hold the same relation. The principle of equality, in verse, admits, it is true, of variation at certain points, for the relief of monotone, as I have already shown, but the point of time is that point which, being the rudimental one, must never be tampered with at all.

To explain:—In farther efforts for the relief of monotone than those to which I have alluded in the summary, men soon came to see that there was no absolute necessity for adhering to the precise

number of syllables, provided the time required for the whole foot was preserved inviolate. They saw, for instance, that in such a line as

or laugh | and shake | in Rab | ĕlais' ēa | sy chair, |

the equalization of the three syllables elais ea with the two syllables composing any of the other feet, could be readily effected by pronouncing the two syllables elais in double quick time. By pronouncing each of the syllables e and lais twice as rapidly as the syllable sy, or the syllable in, or any other short syllable, they could bring the two of them, taken together, to the length, that is to say to the time, of any one short syllable. This consideration enabled them to affect the agreeable variation of three syllables in place of the uniform two. And variation was the object-variation to the ear. What sense is there, then, in supposing this object rendered null by the Blending of the two syllables so as to render them, in absolute effect, one? Of course, there must be no blending. Each syllable must be pronounced as distinctly as possible, (or the variation is lost,) but with twice the rapidity in which the ordinary short syllable is enunciated. That the syllables elais ea do not compose an anapæst is evident, and the signs (ăăā) of their accentuation are erroneous. The foot might be written thus (pyg) the inverted crescents expressing double quick time; and might be called a bastard iambus.

Here is a trochaic line:

Sēe the dēlicate | footed | rēin-deer. |

The prosodies—that is to say the most considerate of them—would here decide that "delicate" is a dactyl used in place of a trochee, and would refer to what they call their "rule," for justification. Others, varying the stupidity, would insist upon a Procrustean adjustment thus (del'cate) an adjustment recommended to all such words as silvery, murmuring, etc., which, it is said, should be not only pronounced, but written silv'ry, murm'ring, and so on, whenever they find themselves in trochaic predicament. I have only to say that "delicate," when circumstanced as above, is neither a dactyl nor a dactyl's equivalent; that I would suggest for it this (EGR) accentuation; that I think it as well to call it a bastard trochee; and that all words, at all events, should be written and pronounced in full, and as nearly as possible as nature intended them.

About eleven years ago, there appeared in "The American Monthly Magazine," (then edited, I believe, by Mess. Hoffman and Benjamin,) a review of Mr. Willis' Poems; the critic putting forth his strength, or his weakness, in an endeavor to show that the poet was either absurdly affected, or grossly ignorant of the laws of verse; the accusation being based altogether on the fact that Mr. W. made occasional use of this very word "delicate," and other similar words, in "the Heroic measure which every one knew consisted of feet of two syllables." Mr.

W. has often, for example, such lines as

That binds him to a woman's delicate love— In the gay sunshine, reverent in the storm— With its invisible fingers my loose hair.

Here, of course, the feet licate love, verent in, and sible fin, are bastard iambuses; are not anapæsts; and are not improperly used. Their employment, on the contrary, by Mr. Willis, is but one of the innumerable instances he has given of keen sensibility in all those matters of taste which may be classed under the general head of fanciful embellishment.

It is also about eleven years ago, if I am not mistaken, since Mr. Horne, (of England,) the author of "Orion," one of the noblest epics in any language, thought it necessary to preface his "Chaucer Modernized" by a very long and evidently a very elaborate essay, of which the greater portion was occupied in a discussion of the seemingly anomalous foot of which we have been speaking. Mr. Horne upholds Chaucer in its frequent use; maintains his superiority, on account of his so frequently using it, over all English versifiers; and, indignantly repelling the common idea of those who make verse on their fingers—that the superfluous syllable is a roughness and an error—very chivalrously makes battle for it as "a grace." That a grace it is, there can be no doubt; and what I complain of is, that the author of the most happily versified long poem in existence, should have been under the necessity of discussing this grace merely as a grace, through forty or fifty vague pages, solely because of his inability to show how and why it is a grace—by which showing the question would have been settled in an instant.

About the trochee used for an iambus, as we see in the beginning of the line,

Whether thou choose Cervantes' serious air,

there is little that need be said. It brings me to the general proposition that, in all rhythms, the prevalent or distinctive feet may be varied at will, and nearly at random, by the occasional introduction of equivalent feet—that is to say, feet the sum of whose syllabic times is equal to the sum of the syllabic times of the distinctive feet. Thus the trochee, whēther, is equal, in the sum of the times of its syllables, to the iambus, thou choōse, in the sum of the times of its syllables; each foot being, in time,

equal to three short syllables. Good versifiers who happen to be, also, good poets, contrive to relieve the monotone of a series of feet, by the use of equivalent feet only at rare intervals, and at such points of their subject as seem in accordance with the startling character of the variation. Nothing of this care is seen in the line quoted above—although Pope has some fine instances of the duplicate effect. Where vehemence is to be strongly expressed, I am not sure that we should be wrong in venturing on two consecutive equivalent feet—although I cannot say that I have ever known the adventure made, except in the following passage, which occurs in "Al Aaraaf," a boyish poem, written by myself when a boy. I am referring to the sudden and rapid advent of a star.

> Dim was its little disk, and angel eyes Alone could see the phantom in the skies, When first the phantom's course was found to be Headlong hitherward o'er the starry sea.

In the "general proposition" above, I speak of the occasional introduction of equivalent feet. It sometimes happens that unskilful versifiers, without knowing what they do, or why they do it, introduce so many "variations" as to exceed in number the "distinctive" feet; when the ear becomes at once balked by the bouleversement of the rhythm. Too many trochees, for example, inserted in an iambic rhythm, would convert the latter to a trochaic. I may note here, that, in all cases, the rhythm designed should be commenced and continued, without variation, until the ear has had full time to comprehend what is the rhythm. In violation of a rule so obviously founded in common sense, many even of our best poets, do not scruple to begin an iambic rhythm

with a trochee, or the converse; or a dactylic with an

anapæst, or the converse; and so on.

A somewhat less objectionable error, although still a decided one, is that of commencing a rhythm, not with a different equivalent foot, but with a "bastard" foot of the rhythm intended. For example:

Māny ă | thought will | come to | memory. |

Here many a is what I have explained to be a bastard trochee, and to be understood should be accented with inverted crescents. It is objectionable solely on account of its position as the opening foot of a trochaic rhythm. Memory, similarly accented, is also a bastard trochee, but unobjectionable, although by no means demanded.

The farther illustration of this point will enable

me to take an important step.

One of our finest poets, Mr. Christopher Pease Cranch, begins a very beautiful poem thus:

Many are the thoughts that come to me In my lonely musing;
And they drift so strange and swift
There's no time for choosing
Which to follow; for to leave
Any, seems a losing.

"A losing" to Mr. Cranch, of course—but this en passant. It will be seen here that the intention is trochaic;—although we do not see this intention by the opening foot, as we should do—or even by the opening line. Reading the whole stanza, however, we perceive the trochaic rhythm as the general design, and so, after some reflection, we divide the first line thus:

Many are the | thoughts that | come to | mē. |

Thus scanned, the line will seem musical. It is—highly so. And it is because there is no end to instances of just such lines of apparently incomprehensible music, that Coleridge thought proper to invent his nonsensical system of what he calls "scanning by accents"—as if "scanning by accents" were anything more than a phrase. Whenever "Christabel" is really not rough, it can be as readily scanned by the true laws (not the supposititious rules) of verse, as can the simplest pentameter of Pope; and where it is rough (passim) these same laws will enable any one of common sense to show why it is rough and to point out, instantaneously, the remedy for the roughness.

A reads and re-reads a certain line, and pronounces it false in rhythm—unmusical. B, however, reads it to A, and A is at once struck with the perfection of the rhythm, and wonders at his dulness in not "catching" it before. Henceforward he admits the line to be musical. B, triumphant, asserts that, to be sure, the line is musical—for it is the work of Coleridge—and that it is A who is not; the fault being in A's false reading. Now here A is right and B is wrong. That rhythm is erroneous, (at some point or other more or less obvious,) which any ordinary reader can, without design, read improperly. It is the business of the poet so to construct his line that the intention must be caught at once. Even when these men have precisely the same understanding of a sentence, they differ and often widely, in their modes of enunciating it. Any one who has taken the trouble to examine the topic of emphasis, (by which I here mean not accent of particular syllables, but the dwelling on entire words,) must have seen that men emphasize in the most singularly arbitrary manner. There are certain large classes of people,

for example, who persist in emphasizing their monosyllables. Little uniformity of emphasis prevails; because the thing itself—the idea, emphasis is referable to no natural—at least, to no well comprehended and therefore uniform law. Beyond a very narrow and vague limit, the whole matter is conventionality. And if we differ in emphasis even when we agree in comprehension, how much more so in the former when in the latter too! Apart, however, from the consideration of natural disagreement, is it not clear that, by tripping here and mouthing there, any sequence of words may be twisted into any species of rhythm? But are we thence to deduce that all sequences of words are rhythmical in a rational understanding of the term? —for this is the deduction, precisely to which the reductio ad absurdum will, in the end, bring all the propositions of Coleridge. Out of a hundred readers of "Christabel," fifty will be able to make nothing of its rhythm, while forty-nine of the remaining fifty will, with some ado, fancy they comprehend it, after the fourth or fifth perusal. The one out of the whole hundred who shall both comprehend and admire it at first sight-must be an unaccountably clever person—and I am by far too modest to assume, for a moment, that that very clever person is myself.

In illustration of what is here advanced I cannot do

better than quote a poem:

Pease porridge hot—pease porridge cold—Pease porridge in the pot—nine days old.

Now those of my readers who have never heard this poem pronounced according to the nursery conventionality, will find its rhythm as obscure as an explanatory note; while those who have heard it,

will divide it thus, declare it musical, and wonder how there can be any doubt about it.

Pease | porridge | hot | pease | porridge | cold | Pease | porridge | in the | pot | nine | days | old. |

The chief thing in the way of this species of rhythm, is the necessity which it imposes upon the poet of travelling in constant company with his compositions, so as to be ready at a moment's notice, to avail himself of a well understood poetical license—that of reading aloud one's own doggerel.

In Mr. Cranch's line,

Many are the | thoughts that | come to | me, |

the general error of which I speak is, of course, very partially exemplified, and the purpose for which, chiefly, I cite it, lies yet further on in our topic.

The two divisions (thoughts that) and (come to) are ordinary trochees. Of the last division (me) we will talk hereafter. The first division (many are the) would be thus accented by the Greek Prosodies (māny ăre thě) and would be called by them acrosoloros. The Latin books would style the foot Pæon Primus, and both Greek and Latin would swear that it was composed of a trochee and what they term a pyrrhic—that is to say, a foot of two short syllables—a thing that cannot be, as I shall presently show.

But now, there is an obvious difficulty. The astrologos, according to the Prosodies' own showing, is equal to five short syllables, and the trochee to three—yet, in the line quoted, these two feet are equal. They occupy precisely the same time. In fact, the whole music of the line depends upon their being made to occupy the same time. The Prosodies then, have demonstrated what all mathematicians have stupidly failed in demonstrating—that three

and five are one and the same thing.

After what I have already said, however, about the bastard trochee and the bastard iambus, no one can have any trouble in understanding that many are the is of similar character. It is merely a bolder variation than usual from the routine of trochees, and introduces to the bastard one additional syllable. But this syllable is not short. That is, it is not short in the sense of "short" as applied to the final syllable of the ordinary trochee, where the word means merely the half of long.

In this case, (that of the additional syllable) "short," if used at all, must be used in the sense of the sixth of long. And all the three final syllables can be called short only with the same understanding of the term. The three together are equal only to the one short syllable (whose place they supply) of the ordinary trochee. It follows that there is no sense in thus () accenting these syllables. We must devise for them some new character which shall denote the sixth of long. Let it be(c)—the crescent placed with the curve to the left. The whole foot (māny are thě) might be called a quick trochee.

We come now to the final division (me) of Mr. Cranch's line. It is clear that this foot, short as it appears, is fully equal in time to each of the preceding. It is in fact the cæsura—the foot which, in the beginning of this paper, I called the most important in all verse. Its chief office is that of pause or termination; and here—at the end of a line—its use is easy, because there is no danger of misapprehending its value. We pause on it, by a seeming necessity, just so long as it has taken us to pronounce the preceding feet, whether iambusses, trochees, dactyls, or anapæsts. It is thus a variable foot, and, with some care, may be well introduced into the

body of a line, as in a little poem of great beauty by Mrs. Welby:

I have | a lit | tle step | son | of on | ly three | years old. |

Here we dwell on the cæsura, son, just as long as it requires us to pronounce either of the preceding or succeeding iambusses. Its value, therefore, in this line, is that of three short syllables. In the following dactylic line its value is that of four short syllables.

Pale as a | lily was | Emily | Gray.

I have accented the cæsura with a (----) by way of

expressing this variability value.

I observed, just now, that there could be no such foot as one of two short syllables. What we start from in the very beginning of all idea on the topic of verse, is quantity, length. Thus when we enunciate an independent syllable it is long, as a matter of course. If we enunciate two, dwelling on both equally, we express equality in the enumeration, or length, and have a right to call them two long syllables. If we dwell on one more than the other, we have also a right to call one short, because it is short in relation to the other. But if we dwell on both equally and with a tripping voice, saying to ourselves here are two short syllables, the query might well be asked of us-"in relation to what are they short? Shortness is but the negation of length. To say, then, that two syllables, placed independently of any other syllable, are short, is merely to say that they have no positive length, or enunciation—in other words that they are no syllables—that they do not exist at all. And if, persisting, we add anything about their equality, we are merely floundering in the idea of an identical

equation, where, x being equal to x, nothing is shown to be equal to zero. In a word, we can form no conception of a pyrrhic as of an independent foot. It is a mere chimera bred in the mad fancy of a

pedant.

From what I have said about the equalization of the several feet of a *line*, it must not be deduced that any *necessity* for equality in time exists between the rhythm of *several* lines. A poem, or even a stanza, may begin with iambusses, in the first line, and proceed with anapæsts in the second, or even with the less accordant dactyls, as in the opening of quite a pretty specimen of verse by Miss Mary A. S. Aldrich:

The wa | ter li | 1y sleeps | in pride |
Dōwn ĭn thĕ | dēpths ŏf thĕ | āzūre | lake. |

Here azure is a spondee, equivalent to a dactyl; lake a cæsura.

I shall now best proceed in quoting the initial lines of Byron's "Bride of Abydos:"

Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime-Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle Now melt into softness, now madden to crime? Know ye the land of the cedar and vine, Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams ever shine, And the light wings of Zephyr, oppressed with perfume, Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gul in their bloom? Where the citron and olive are fairest of fruit And the voice of the nightingale never is mute-Where the virgins are soft as the roses they twine. And all save the spirit of man is divine? 'Tis the land of the East-'tis the clime of the Sun-Can he smile on such deeds as his children have done? Oh, wild as the accents of lovers' farewell Are the hearts that they bear and the tales that they tell. Now the flow of these lines, (as times go,) is very sweet and musical. They have been often admired, and justly—as times go—that is to say, it is a rare thing to find better versification of its kind. And where verse is pleasant to the ear, it is silly to find fault with it because it refuses to be scanned. Yet I have heard men, professing to be scholars, who made no scruple of abusing these lines of Byron's on the ground that they were musical in spite of all law. Other gentlemen, not scholars, abused "all law" for the same reason:—and it occurred neither to the one party nor to the other that the law about which they were disputing might possibly be no law at all—an ass of a law in the skin of a lion.

The Grammars said something about dactylic lines and it was easily seen that *these* lines were at least meant for dactylic. The first one was, therefore, thus divided:

Know yĕ thĕ | lānd whĕre thĕ | cyprĕss and | myrtlĕ. |

The concluding foot was a mystery; but the Prosodies said something about the dactylic "measure" calling now and then for a double rhyme; and the court of inquiry were content to rest in the double rhyme, without exactly perceiving what a double rhyme had to do with the question of an irregular foot. Quitting the first line, the second was thus scanned:

Arē ĕmblĕms | ōf deĕds thăt | āre dŏne in | thēir clime. |

It was immediately seen, however, that this would not do:—it was at war with the whole emphasis of the reading. It could not be supposed that Byron, or any one in his senses, intended to place stress upon such monosyllables as "are," "of," and "their," nor could "their clime," collated with

"to crime," in the corresponding line below, be fairly twisted into anything like a "double rhyme," so as to bring everything within the category of the Grammars. But farther these Grammars spoke not. The inquirers, therefore, in spite of their sense of harmony in the lines, when considered without reference to scansion, fell back upon the idea that the "Are" was a blunder—an excess for which the poet should be sent to Coventry—and, striking it out, they scanned the remainder of the line as follows:

---- ēmblēms ŏf | deēds that are | done in their clime. |

This answered pretty well; but the Grammars admitted no such foot as a foot of one syllable; and besides the rhythm was dactylic. In despair, the books are well searched, however, and at last the investigators are gratified by a full solution of the riddle in the profound "Observation" quoted in the beginning of this article:-"When a syllable is wanting, the verse is said to be catalectic; when the measure is exact, the line is acatalectic; when there is a redundant syllable it forms hypermeter." This is enough. The anomalous line is pronounced to be catalectic at the head and to form hypermeter at the tail:-and so on, and so on; it being soon discovered that nearly all the remaining lines are in a similar predicament, and that what flows so smoothly to the ear, although so roughly to the eye, is, after all, a mere jumble of catalecticism, acatalectism, and hypermeter-not to say worse.

Now, had this court of inquiry been in possession of even the shadow of the *philosophy* of Verse, they would have had no trouble in reconciling this oil and water of the eye and ear, by merely scanning the passage without reference to lines, and, continuously,

thus:

Know ye the | land where the | cypress and | myrtle Are | emblems of | deeds that are | done in their | clime Where the | rage of the | vulture the | love of the | turtle Now | melt into | softness now | madden to | crime | Know ye the land of the cedar and vine Where the flowers ever | blossom the | beams ever | shine Where the | light wings of | Zephyr op | pressed by per | fume | Wax | faint o'er the | gardens of | Gul in their | bloom Where the | citron and olive are fairest of fruit And the voice of the nightingale | never is | mute Where the | virgins are | soft as the | roses they | twine And | all save the | spirit of | man is di | vine 'Tis the | land of the | East 'tis the | clime of the | Sun Can he | smile on such | deeds as his | children have | done Oh | wild as the | accents of | lovers' fare | well Are the hearts that they bear and the tales that they | tell.

Here "crime" and "tell" (italicised) are cæsuras, each having the value of a dactyl, four short syllables; while "fume Wax," "twine and," and "done Oh," are spondees which, of course, being composed of two long syllables, are also equal to four short, and are the dactyl's natural equivalent. The nicety of Byron's ear has led him into a succession of feet which, with two trivial exceptions as regards melody, are absolutely accurate—a very rare occurrence this in dactylic or anapæstic rhythms. The exceptions are found in the spondee "twine And," and the dactyl, "smile on such." Both feet are false in point of melody. In "twine And," to make out the rhythm, we must force "And" into a length which it will not naturally bear. We are called on to sacrifice either the proper length of the syllable as demanded by its position as a member of a spondee, or the customary accentuation of the word in conversation. There is no hesitation, and should be none. We at once give up the sound for the sense; and the rhythm is imperfect. In this instance it is very slightly so;—not one person in ten

thousand could, by ear, detect the inaccuracy. But the perfection of verse, as regards melody, consists in its never demanding any such sacrifice as is here demanded. The rhythmical must agree, thoroughly, with the reading, flow. This perfection has in no instance been attained—but is unquestionably attainable. "Smile on such," the dactyl, is incorrect, because "such," from the character of the two consonants ch, cannot easily be enunciated in the ordinary time of a short syllable, which its position declares that it is. Almost every reader will be able to appreciate the slight difficulty here; and yet the error is by no means so important as that of the "And" in the spondee. By dexterity we may pronounce "such" in the true time; but the attempt to remedy the rhythmical deficiency of the And by drawing it out, merely aggravates the offence against natural enunciation, by directing attention to the offense.

My main object, however, in quoting these lines, is to show that, in spite of the Prosodies, the length of a line is entirely an arbitrary matter. We might divide the commencement of Byron's poem thus:

Know ye the | land where the. |

or thus:

Know ye the | land where the | cypress and.| or thus:

Know ye the | land where the | cypress and | myrtle are. | or thus:

Know ye the | land where the | cypress and | myrtle are | emblems of |

In short, we may give it any division we please, and the lines will be good—provided we have at least two feet in a line. As in mathematics two units are required to form number, so rhythm, (from the Greek αριθμος, number,) demands for its formation at least two feet. Beyond doubt, we often see such lines as

Know ye the— Land where the—

lines of one foot; and our Prosodies admit such; but with impropriety; for common sense would dictate that every so obvious division of a poem as is made by a line, should include within itself all that is necessary for its own comprehension; but in a line of one foot we can have no appreciation of rhythm, which depends upon the equality between two or more pulsations. The false lines, consisting sometimes of a single cæsura, which are seen in mock Pindaric odes, are of course "rhythmical" only in connection with some other line; and it is this want of independent rhythm which adapts them to the purposes of burlesque alone. Their effect is that of incongruity (the principle of mirth;) for they include the blankness of prose amid the harmony of verse.

My second object in quoting Byron's lines, was that of showing how absurd it often is to cite a single line from amid the body of a poem, for the purpose of instancing the perfection or imperfection of the line's rhythm. Were we to see by itself

Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle,

we might justly condemn it as defective in the final foot, which is equal to only three, instead of being

equal to four, short syllables.

In the foot (flowers ever) we shall find a further exemplification of the principle of the bastard iambus, bastard trochee, and quick trochee, as I have been at some pains in describing these feet above. All the Prosodies on English verse would insist upon

making an elision in "flowers," thus (flow'rs,) but this is nonsense. In the quick trochee (many are the) occurring in Mr. Cranch's trochaic line, we had to equalize the time of the three syllables (ny, are, the,) to that of the one short syllable whose position they usurp. Accordingly each of these syllables is equal to the third of a short syllable, that is to say, the sixth of a long. But in Byron's dactylic rhythm, we have to equalize the time of the three syllables (ers, ev, er,) to that of the one long syllable whose position they usurp, or, (which is the same thing,) of the two short. Therefore the value of each of the syllables (ers. ev. and er) is the third of a long. We enunciate them with only half the rapidity we employ in enunciating the three final syllables of the quick trochee—which latter is a rare foot. The "flowers ever," on the contrary, is as common in the dactylic rhythm as is the bastard trochee in the trochaic, or the bastard iambus in the iambic. We may as well accent it with the curve of the crescent to the right, and call it a bastard dactyl. A bastard anapæst, whose nature I now need be at no trouble in explaining, will of course occur, now and then, in an anapæstic rhythm.

In order to avoid any chance of that confusion which is apt to be introduced in an essay of this kind by too sudden and radical an alteration of the conventionalities to which the reader has been accustomed, I have thought it right to suggest for the accent marks of the bastard trochee, bastard iambus, etc., etc., certain characters which, in merely varying the direction of the ordinary short accent () should imply, what is the fact, that the feet themselves are not new feet, in any proper sense, but simply modifications of the feet, respectively, from which they derive their names. Thus a bastard

iambus is, in its essentiality, that is to say, in its time, an iambus. The variation lies only in the distribution of this time. The time, for example, occupied by the one short (or half of long) syllable, in the ordinary iambus, is, in the bastard, spread equally over two syllables, which are accordingly the fourth of long.

But this fact—the fact of the essentiality, or whole time, of the foot being unchanged, is now so fully before the reader, that I may venture to propose, finally, an accentuation which shall answer the real purpose—that is to say, what should be the real purpose of all accentuation—the purpose of expressing to the eye the exact relative value of every

syllable employed in Verse.

I have already shown that enunciation, or length, is the point from which we start. In other words, we begin with a long syllable. This then is our unit; and there will be no need of accenting it at all. An unaccented syllable, in a system of accentuation, is to be regarded always as a long syllable. Thus a spondee would be without accent. In an iambus, the first syllable being "short," or the half of long, should be accented with a small 2, placed beneath the syllable; the last syllable, being long, should be unaccented;—the whole would be thus (control.) In a trochee,

these accents would be merely conversed, thus (manly.) In a dactyl, each of the two final syllables,

being the half of long, should, also, be accented with a small 2 beneath the syllable; and, the first syllable left unaccented, the whole would be thus (happiness.)

In an anapæst we should converse the dactyl thus, (in the land.) In the bastard dactyl, each of the

three concluding syllables being the third of long,

should be accented with a small 3 beneath the syllable and the whole foot would stand thus, (flowers ever). In the bastard anapæst we should converse the bastard dactyl thus, (in the rebound.) In the bastard iambus, each of the two initial syllables, being the fourth of long, should be accented, below with a small 4; the whole foot would be thus, (in the rain). In the bastard trochee, we should converse the bastard iambus thus, (many a.) In the quick trochee, each of the three concluding syllables, being the sixth of long, should be accented, below, with a small 6; the whole foot would be thus, (many are the.) The quick iambus is not yet created, and most probably never will be; for it will be excessively useless, awkward, and liable to misconception -as I have already shown that even the quick trochee is:-but, should it appear, we must accent it by conversing the quick trochee. The cæsura, being variable in length, but always longer than "long," should be accented, above, with a number expressing the length, or value, of the distinctive foot of the rhythm in which it occurs. Thus a cæsura, occurring in a spondaic rhythm, would be accented with a small 2 above the syllable, or, rather, foot. Occurring in a dactylic or anapæstic rhythm, we also accent it with the 2, above the foot. Occurring in an iambic rhythm, however, it must be accented, above, with 11; for this is the relative value of the iambus. Occurring in the trochaic rhythm, we give it, of course, the same accentuation. For the complex 11, however, it would be advisable to substitute the simpler expression 3 which amounts to the same thing.

In some system of accentuation Mr. Cranch's lines, quoted above, would thus be written:

Many are the | thoughts that | come to | me
In my | lonely | musing, |

And they | drift so | strange and | swift

There's no | time for | choosing |

Which to | follow | for to | leave

Any, | seems a | losing. |

In the ordinary system the accentuation would be thus:

Māny arĕ thĕ | thōughts thặt | cōme tŏ | mē
In my | lōnely | mŭsǐng, |
ānd thĕy | drīft sŏ | strānge ănd | swift |
Therē's nŏ | timē fŏr | choōsǐng |
Whīch tŏ | fōllŏw, | fōr tŏ | lēave
āny, | seēms ă | lōsǐng. |

It must be observed, here, that I do not grant this to be the "ordinary" scansion. On the contrary, I never yet met the man who had the faintest comprehension of the true scanning of these lines, or of such as these. But granting this to be the mode in which our Prosodies would divide the feet, they would accentuate the syllables as just above.

Now, let any reasonable person compare the two modes. The first advantage seen in my mode is that of simplicity—of time, labor, and ink saved. Counting the fractions as *two* accents, even, there will be found only *twenty-six* accents to the stanza. In the common accentuation there are *forty-one*.

But admit that all this is a trifle, which it is not, and let us proceed to points of importance. Does the common accentuation express the truth, in particular, in general, or in any regard? Is it consistent with itself? Does it convey either to the ignorant or to the scholar a just conception of the rhythm of the lines? Each of these questions must be answered in the negative. The crescents, being precisely similar, must be understood as expressing, all of them, one and the same thing: and so all prosodies have always understood them and wished them to be understood. They express, indeed, "short"-but this word has all kinds of meanings. It serves to represent (the reader is left to guess when) sometimes the half, sometimes the third, sometimes the fourth, sometimes the sixth, of "long"-while "long" itself, in the books, is left undefined and undescribed. On the other hand, the horizontal accent, it may be said, expresses sufficiently well, and unvaryingly, the syllables which are meant to be long. It does nothing of the kind. This horizontal accent is placed over the cæsura (wherever, as in the Latin Prosodies, the cæsura is recognised) as well as over the ordinary long syllable, and implies anything and everything, just as the crescent. But grant that it does express the ordinary long syllables, (leaving the cæsura out of question,) have I not given the identical expression, by not employing any expression at all? In a word, while the Prosodies, with a certain number of accents, express precisely nothing whatever, I, with scarcely half the number, have expressed everything which, in a system of accentuation, demands expression. In glancing at my mode in the lines of Mr. Cranch, it will be seen that it conveys not only the exact relation of the syllables and feet, among themselves, in those

particular lines, but their precise value in relation to any other existing or conceivable feet or syllables, in any existing or conceivable system of rhythm.

The object of what we call scansion is the distinct marking of the rhythmical flow. Scansion with accents or perpendicular lines between the feetthat is to say scansion by the voice only—is scansion to the ear only; and all very good in its way. The written scansion addresses the ear though the eye. In either case the object is the distinct marking of the rhythmical, musical, or reading flow. There can be no other object and there is none. Of course, then, the scansion and the reading flow should go hand in hand. The former must agree with the latter. The former represents and expresses the latter; and is good or bad as it truly or falsely represents and expresses it. If by the written scansion of a line we are not enabled to perceive any rhythm or music in the line, then either the line is unrhythmical or the scansion false. Apply all this to the English lines which we have quoted, at various points, in the course of this article. It will be found that the scansion exactly conveys the rhythm, and thus thoroughly fulfils the only purpose for which scansion is required.

But let the scansion of the schools be applied to the Greek and Latin verse, and what result do we find?—that the verse is one thing and the scansion quite another. The ancient verse, read aloud, is in general musical, and occasionally very musical. Scanned by the Prosodial rules we can, for the most part, make nothing of it whatever. In the case of the English verse, the more emphatically we dwell on the divisions between the feet, the more distinct is our perception of the kind of rhythm intended. In the case of the Greek and Latin, the more we

dwell the *less* distinct is this perception. To make this clear by an example:

Mæcenas, atavis edite regibus,
O, et præsidium et dulce decus meum,
Sunt quos curriculo pulverem Olympicum
Collegisse juvat, metaque fervidis
Evitata rotis, palmaque nobilis
Terrarum dominos evehit ad Deos.

Now in reading these lines, there is scarcely one person in a thousand who, if even ignorant of Latin will not immediately feel and appreciate their flow—their music. A prosodist, however, informs the public that the scansion runs thus:

Mæce | nas ata | vis | edite | regibus |
O, et | præsidi' | et | dulce de | cus meum |
Sunt quos | curricu | lo | pulver' O | lympicum |
Colle | gisse ju | vat | metaque | fervidis |
Evi | tata ro | tis | palmaque | nobilis |
Terra | rum domi | nos | evehit | ad Deos. |

Now I do not deny that we get a certain sort of music from the lines if we read them according to this scansion, but I wish to call attention to the fact that this scansion and the certain sort of music which grows out of it, are entirely at war not only with the reading flow which any ordinary person would naturally give the lines, but with the reading flow universally given them, and never denied them, by even the most obstinate and stolid of scholars.

And now these questions are forced upon us—"Why exists this discrepancy detween the modern verse with its scansion, and the ancient verse with its scansion!"—"Why, in the former case, are there agreement and representation, while in the latter there is neither the one or the other!" or, to come to the point,—"How are we to reconcile the ancient verse with the scholastic scansion of it!" This

absolutely necessary conciliation—shall we bring it about by supposing the scholastic scansion wrong because the ancient verse is right, or by maintaining that the ancient verse is wrong because the scholastic scansion is not to be gainsayed?

Were we to adopt the latter mode of arranging the difficulty, we might, in some measure, at least simplify the expression of the arrangment by putting it thus—Because the pedants have no eyes,

therefore the old poets had no ears.

"But," say the gentlemen without the eyes, "the scholastic scansion, although certainly not handed down to us in form from the old poets themselves (the gentlemen without the ears,) is nevertheless deduced from certain facts which are supplied us by careful observation of the old poems.

And let us illustrate this strong position by an example from an American poet—who must be a poet of some eminence, or he will not answer the purpose. Let us take Mr. Alfred B. Street. I remember these two lines of his:

His sinuous path, by blazes, wound Among trunks grouped in myriads round.

With the sense of these lines I have nothing to do. When a poet is in a "fine frenzy," he may as well imagine a large forest as a small one—and "by blazes!" is not intended for an oath. My concern is with the rhythm, which is iambic.

Now let us suppose that, a thousand years hence, when the "American language" is dead, a learned prosodist should be deducing from "careful observation" of our best poets, a system of scansion for our poetry. And let us suppose that this prosodist had so little dependence in the generality and immutability of the laws of Nature, as to assume in

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the outset, that, because we lived a thousand years before his time, and made use of steam-engines instead of mesmeric balloons, we must therefore have had a *very* singular fashion of mouthing our vowels, and altogether of hudsonizing our verse. And let us suppose that with these and other fundamental propositions carefully put away in his brain, he should arrive at the line,—

Among | trunks grouped | in my | riads round.

Finding it an obviously iambic rhythm, he would divide it as above; and observing that "trunks" made the first member of an iambus, he would call it short, as Mr. Street intended it to be. Now farther:—if instead admitting the possibility that Mr. Street, (who by that time would be called Street simply, just as we say Homer,)—that Mr. Street might have been in the habit of writing carelessly, as the poets of the prosodist's own era did, and as all poets will do (on account of being geniuses,)-instead of admitting this, suppose the learned scholar should make a "rule" and put it in a book, to the effect that, in the American verse, the vowel u, when found imbedded among nine consonants, was short: what, under such circumstances, would the sensible people of the scholar's day have a right not only to think. but to say of that scholar?—why, that he was "a fool—by blazes!"

I have put an extreme case, but it strikes at the root of the error. The "rules" are 'grounded in "authority," and this "authority"—can any one tell us what it means? or can any one suggest anything that it may not mean? Is it not clear that the "scholar" above referred to, might as readily have deduced from authority a totally false system as a partially true one? To deduce from authority a con-

sistent prosody of the ancient metres would indeed have been within the limits of the barest possibility; and the task has not been accomplished, for the reason that it demands a species of ratiocination altogether out of keeping with the brain of a bookworm. A rigid scrutiny will show that the very few "rules" which have not as many exceptions as examples, are those which have, by accident, their true bases not in authority, but in the omniprevalent laws of syllabification; such, for example, as the rule which declares a vowel before two consonants to be long.

In a word, the gross confusion and antagonism of the scholastic prosody, as well as its marked inapplicability to the reading flow of the rhythms it pretends to illustrate, are attributable, first, to the utter absence of natural principle as a guide in the investigations which have been undertaken by inadequate men; and secondly, to the neglect of the obvious consideration that the ancient poems, which have been the *criteria* throughout, were the work of men who must have written as loosely, and with as little definitive system, as ourselves.

Were Horace alive to-day, he would divide for us his first Ode thus, and "make great eyes" when assured by the prosodists that he had no business to make any such division!

Mæcenas | atavis | edite | regibus |
O et præ | sidium et | dulce de | cus meum |
Sunt quos cur | riculo | pulverem O | lympicum |
Collegisse | juvat | metaque | fervidis |
Evitata | rotis | palmaque | nobilis |
Terrarum | dominos | evehit | ad Deos. |

Read by this scansion, the flow is preserved; and the more we dwell on the divisions, the more the intended rhythm becomes apparent. Moreover, the feet have all the same time; while, in the scholastic scansion, trochees—admitted trochees—are absurdly employed as equivalents to spondees and dactyls. The books declare, for instance, that *Colle*, which begins the fourth line, is a trochee, and seem to be gloriously unconscious that to put a trochee in opposition with a longer foot, is to violate the inviolable principle of all music, time.

It will be said, however, by "some people," that I have no business to make a dactyl out of such obviously long syllables as sunt, quos, cur. Certainly I have no business to do so. I never do so. And Horace should not have done so. But he did. Mr. Bryant and Mr. Longfellow do the same thing every day. And merely because these gentleman, now and then, forget themselves in this way, it would be hard if some future prosodist should insist upon twisting the "Thanatopsis," or the "Spanish Student," into a jumble of trochees, spondees, and dactyls.

It may be said, also, by some other people, that in the word decus, I have succeeded no better than the books, in making the scansional agree with the reading flow; and that decus was not pronounced decus. I reply, that there can be no doubt of the word having been pronounced, in this case, decus. It must be observed, that the Latin inflection, or variation of a word in its terminating syllables, caused the Romans—must have caused them, to pay greater attention to the termination of a word than to its commencement, or than we do to the terminations of our words. The end of the Latin word established that relation of the word with other words

which we establish by prepositions or auxiliary verbs. Therefore, it would seem infinitely less odd to them than it does to us, to dwell at any time, for any slight purpose, abnormally, on a terminating syllable. In verse, this license—scarcely a license—would be frequently admitted. These ideas unlock the secret of such lines as the

Litoreis ingens inventa sub ilicibus sus, and the

Parturiunt montes et nascitur ridiculus mus,

which I quoted, some time ago, while speaking of rhyme.

As regards the prosodial elisions, such as that of rem before O, in pulverem Olympicum, it is really difficult to understand how so dismally silly a notion could have entered the brain even of a pedant. Were it demanded of me why the books cut off one vowel before another, I might say-It is, perhaps, because the books think that, since a bad reader is so apt to slide the one vowel into the other at any rate, it is just as well to print them ready-slided. But in the case of the terminating m, which is the most readily pronounced of all consonants, (as the infantile mamma will testify,) and the most impossible to cheat the ear of by any system of sliding in the case of the m, I should be driven to reply that, to the best of my belief, the prosodists did the thing, because they had a fancy for doing it, and wished to see how funny it would look after it was done. The thinking reader will perceive that, from the great facility with which em may be enunciated, it is admirably suited to form one of the rapid short syllables in the bastard dactvl (pulverem O;) but because the

books had no conception of a bastard dactyl, they knocked it in the head at once—by cutting off its tail!

Let me give a specimen of the true scansion of another Horatian measure—embodying an instance of proper elision.

Integer | vitæ | scelerisque | purus |
Non eget | Mauri | jaculis ne | que arcu |
Nec vene | natis | gravida sa | gittis,

2 2 2 3 3 3 3 3 |
Fusce, pha | retrà.

Here the regular recurrence of the bastard dactyl, gives great animation to the rhythm. The *e* before *a* in *que arcu*, is, almost of sheer necessity, cut off—that is to say, run into the *a* so as to preserve the spondee. But even this license it would have been better not to take.

Had I space, nothing would afford me greater pleasure than to proceed with the scansion of all the ancient rhythms, and to show how easily, by the help of common sense, the intended music of each and all can be rendered instantaneously apparent. But I have already overstepped my limits, and must bring this paper to an end.

It will never do, however, to omit all mention of the heroic hexameter.

I began the "processes" by a suggestion of the spondee as the first step towards verse. But the innate monotony of the spondee has caused its disappearance, as the basis of rhythm, from all modern poetry. We may say, indeed, that the French heroic—the most wretchedly monotonous verse in existence—is, to all intents and purposes, spondaic. But it is not designedly spondaic—and if the French were ever to examine it at all, they would no doubt pronounce it iambic. It must be observed, that the French language is strangely peculiar in this point—

that it is without accentuation, and consequently without verse. The genius of the people, rather than the structure of the tongue, declares that their words are, for the most part, enunciated with an uniform dwelling on each syllable. For example—we say, "syllabification." A Frenchman would say, syl-labi-fi-ca-ti-on; dwelling on no one of the syllables with any noticeable particularity. Here again I put an extreme case, in order to be well understood; but the general fact is as I give it—that, comparatively, the French have no accentuation. And there can be nothing worth the name of verse, without. Therefore, the French have no verse worth the namewhich is the fact, put in sufficiently plain terms. Their iambic rhythm so superabounds in absolute spondees, as to warrant me in calling its basis spondaic; but French is the only modern tongue which has any rhythm with such basis; and even in the French, it is, as I have said, unintentional.

Admitting, however, the validity of my suggestion, that the spondee was the first approach to verse, we should expect to find, first, natural spondees (words each forming just a spondee,) most abundant in the most ancient languages; and, secondly, we should expect to find spondees forming the basis of the most ancient rhythms. These expectations are in both cases confirmed.

Of the Greek hexameter, the intentional basis is spondaic. The dactyls are the *variation* of the theme. It will be observed that there is no absolute certainty about *their* points of interposition. The penultimate foot, it is true, is usually a dactyl; but not uniformly so; while the ultimate, on which the ear *lingers* is always a spondee. Even that the penultimate is usually a dactyl may be clearly referred to the necessity of winding up with the *distinctive*

spondee. In corroboration of this idea, again, we should look to find the penultimate spondee most usual in the most ancient verse; and, accordingly, we find it more frequent in the Greek than in the Latin hexameter.

But besides all this, spondees are not only more prevalent in the heroic hexameter than dactyls, but occur to such an extent as is even unpleasant to modern ears, on account of monotony. What the modern chiefly appreciates and admires in the Greek hexameter, is the melody of the abundant vowel sounds. The Latin hexameters really please very few moderns -although so many pretend to fall into ecstasies about them. In the hexameters quoted, several pages ago, from Silius Italicus, the preponderance of the spondee is strikingly manifest. Besides the natural spondees of the Greek and Latin, numerous artificial ones arise in the verse of these tongues on account of the tendency which inflection has to throw full accentuation on terminal syllables; and the preponderance of the spondee is farther ensured by the comparative infrequency of the small prepositions which we have to serve us instead of case, and also the absence of the diminutive auxiliary verbs with which we have to eke out the expression of our primary ones. These are the monosyllables whose abundance serve to stamp the poetic genius of a language as tripping or dactylic.

Now paying no attention to these facts, Sir Philip Sidney, Professor Longfellow, and innumerable other persons more or less modern, have busied themselves in constructing what they supposed to be "English hexameters on the model of the Greek." The only difficulty was that (even leaving out of question the melodious masses of vowel,) these gentlemen never could get their English hexameters to sound Greek.

Did they look Greek?—that should have been the query; and the reply might have led to a solution of the riddle. In placing a copy of ancient hexameters side by side with a copy (in similar type) of such hexameters as Professor Longfellow, or Professor Felton, or the Frogpondian Professors collectively, are in the shameful practice of composing "on the model of the Greek," it will be seen that the latter (hexameters, not professors) are about one third longer to the eye on an average, than the former. The more abundant dactyls make the difference. And it is the greater number of spondees in the Greek than in the English—in the ancient than in the modern tongue—which has caused it to fall out that while these eminent scholars were groping about in the dark for a Greek hexameter, which is a spondaic rhythm varied now and then by dactyls, they merely stumbled, to the lasting scandal of scholarship, over something which, on account of its longleggedness, we may as well term a Feltonian hexameter, and which is a dactylic rhythm, interrupted, rarely, by artificial spondees which are no spondees at all, and which are curiously thrown in by the heels at all kinds of improper and impertinent points.

Here is a specimen of the Longfellownian hex-

ameter.

Also the | church with | in was a |dorned for | this was the | season |

In which the | young their | parents' | hope and the | loved ones of | Heaven |

Should at the | foot of the | altar re | new the | vows of their | baptism |

Therefore each | nook and | corner was | swept and |cleaned and the | dust was |

Blown from the | walls and | ceiling and | from the | oilpainted | benches. | Mr. Longfellow is a man of imagination—but can he imagine that any individual, with a proper understanding of the danger of lock-jaw, would make the attempt of twisting his mouth into the shape necessary for the emission of such spondees as "parents," and "from the," or such dactyls as "cleaned and the" and "loved ones of?" "Baptism" is by no means a bad spondee—perhaps because it happens to be a dactyl;—of all the rest, however, I am dreadfully ashamed.

But these feet—dactyls and spondees, all together,—should thus be put at once into their proper position:

"Also, the church within was adorned; for this was the season in which the young, their parents' hope, and the loved ones of Heaven, should, at the feet of the altar, renew the vows of their baptism. Therefore, each nook and corner was swept and cleaned; and the dust was blown from the walls and ceiling, and from the oil-painted benches.

There!—That is respectable prose; and it will incur no danger of ever getting its character ruined by any body's mistaking it for verse.

But even when we let these modern hexameters go, as Greek, and merely hold them fast in their proper character of Longfellownian, or Feltonian, or Frogpondian, we must still condemn them as having been committed in a radical misconception of the philosophy of verse. The spondee, as I observed, is the theme of the Greek line. Most of the ancient hexameters begin with spondees, for the reason that the spondee is the theme; and the ear is filled with it as with a burden. Now the Feltonian dactylics have, in the same way, dactyls for the theme, and most of them begin with dactyls—which is all very proper if not very Greek—but, unhappily, the one point at which they are very Greek is that point,

precisely, at which they should be nothing but Feltonian. They always *close* with what is meant for a spondee. To be consistently silly, they should die off in a dactyl.

That a truly Greek hexameter cannot, however, be readily composed in English, is a proposition which I am by no means inclined to admit. I think I could manage the point myself. For example:

Do tell! | when may we | hope to make | men of sense | out of the | Pundits |

Born and brought | up with their | snouts deep | down in the | mud of the | Frog-pond?

Why ask? | who ever | yet saw | money made | out of a | fat old |

Jew, or | downright | upright | nutmegs | out of a | pineknot? |

The proper spondee predominance is here preserved. Some of the dactyls are not so good as I could wish—but, upon the whole, the rhythm is very decent—to say nothing of its excellent sense.

THE POWER OF WORDS

Oinos.—Pardon, Agathos, the weakness of a spirit

new-fledged with immortality!

Agathos.—You have spoken nothing, my Oinos, for which pardon is to be demanded. Not even here is knowledge a thing of intuition. For wisdom, ask of the angels freely, that it may be given!

Oinos.—But in this existence, I dreamed that I should be at once cognizant of all things, and thus

at once happy in being cognizant of all.

Agathos.—Ah, not in knowledge is happiness, but in the acquisition of knowledge! In for ever knowing, we are for ever blessed; but to know all, were the curse of a fiend.

Oinos.—But does not The Most High know all?

Agathos.—That (since he is The Most Happy)
must be still the one thing unknown even to Him.

Oinos.—But, since we grow hourly in knowledge,

must not at last all things be known?

Agathos.—Look down into the abysmal distances!—attempt to force the gaze down the multitudinous vistas of the stars, as we sweep slowly through them thus—and thus—and thus! Even the spiritual vision, is it not at all points arrested by the continuous golden walls of the universe?—the walls of the myriads of the shining bodies that mere number has appeared to blend into unity?

Oinos.—I clearly perceive that the infinity of

matter is no dream.

Agathos.—There are no dreams in Aidenn—but it is here whispered that, of this infinity of matter, the sole purpose is to afford infinite springs, at which the soul may allay the thirst to know which is for ever

unquenchable within it—since to quench it, would be to extinguish the soul's self. Question me then, my Oinos, freely and without fear. Come! we will leave to the left the loud harmony of the Pleiades, and swoop outward from the throne into the starry meadows beyond Orion, where, for pansies and violets, and heart's-ease, are the beds of the triplicate and triple-tinted suns.

Oinos.—And now, Agathos, as we proceed, instruct me!—speak to me in the earth's familiar tones! I understand not what you hinted to me, just now, of the modes or of the methods of what, during mortality, we were accustomed to call Creation. you mean to say that the Creator is not God?

Agathos.—I mean to say that the Deity does not create.

Oinos.—Explain!

Agathos.—In the beginning only, he created. The seeming creatures which are now, throughout the universe, so perpetually springing into being, can only be considered as the mediate or indirect, not as the direct or immediate results of the Divine creative power.

Oinos.—Among men, my Agathos, this idea would

be considered heretical in the extreme.

Agathos.—Among angels, my Oinos, it is seen to be

simply true.

Oinos.—I can comprehend you thus far-that certain operations of what we term Nature, or the natural laws, will, under certain conditions, give rise to that which has all the appearance of creation. Shortly before the final overthrow of the earth, there were, I well remember, many very successful experiments in what some philosophers were weak enough to denominate the creation of animalculæ.

Agathos.—The cases of which you speak were, in

fact, instances of the secondary creation—and of the only species of creation which has ever been, since the first word spoke into existence the first law.

Oinos.—Are not the starry worlds that, from the abyss of nonentity, burst hourly forth into the heavens—are not these stars, Agathos, the imme-

diate handiwork of the King?

Agathos.-Let me endeavor, my Oinos, to lead you, step by step, to the conception I intend. You are well aware that, as no thought can perish, so no act is without infinite result. We moved our hands, for example, when we were dwellers on the earth, and, in so doing, we gave vibration to the atmosphere which engirdled it. This vibration was indefinitely extended, till it gave impulse to every particle of the earth's air, which thenceforward, and for ever, was actuated by the one movement of the hand. This fact the mathematicians of our globe well knew. They made the special effects, indeed, wrought in the fluid by special impulses, the subject of exact calculation—so that it became easy to determine in what precise period an impulse of given extent would engirdle the orb, and impress (for ever) every atom of the atmosphere circumambient. Retrograding, they found no difficulty, from a given effect, under given conditions, in determining the value of the original impulse. Now the mathematicians who saw that the results of any given impulse were absolutely endless-and who saw that a portion of these results were accurately traceable through the agency of algebraic analysis—who saw, too, the facility of the retrogradation—these men saw, at the same time, that this species of analysis itself, had within itself a capacity for indefinite progress that there were no bounds conceivable to its advancement and applicability, except within the intellect of him who advanced or applied it. But at this point our mathematicians paused.

Oinos.-And why, Agathos, should they have

proceeded?

Agathos.—Because there were some considerations of deep interest beyond. It was deducible from what they knew, that to a being of infinite understanding—one to whom the perfection of the algebraic analysis lay unfolded—there could be no difficulty in tracing every impulse given the airand the other through the air-to the remotest consequences at any even infinitely remote epoch of time. It is indeed demonstrable that every such impulse given the air, must in the end, impress every individual thing that exists within the universe:and the being of infinite understanding—the being whom we have imagined—might trace the remote undulations of the impulse-trace them upward and onward in their influences upon all particles of all matter—upward and onward for ever in their modifications of old forms—or, in other words, in their creation of new-until he found them reflectedunimpressive at last—back from the throne of the Godhead. And not only could such a being do this, but at any epoch, should a given result be afforded him-should one of these numberless comets, for example, be presented to his inspection—he could have no difficulty in determining, by the analytic retrogradation, to what original impulse it was due. This power of retrogradation in its absolute fulness and perfection—this faculty of referring at all epochs, all effects to all causes—is of course the prerogative of the Deity alone—but in every variety of degree, short of the absolute perfection, is the power itself exercised by the whole host of the Angelic Intelligences.

Oinos.—But you speak merely of impulses upon the air.

Agathos.—In speaking of the air, I referred only to the earth: but the general proposition has reference to impulses upon the ether—which, since it pervades, and alone pervades all space, is thus the great medium of creation.

Oinos.—Then all motion, of whatever nature, creates?

Agathos.—It must: but a true philosophy has long taught that the source of all motion is thought—and the source of all thought is——

Oinos.—God.

Agathos.—I have spoken to you, Oinos, as to a child of the fair Earth which lately perished—of impulses upon the atmosphere of the Earth.

Oinos.—You did.

Agathos.—And while I thus spoke, did there not cross your mind some thought of the physical power of words? Is not every word an impulse on the air?

Oinos.—But why, Agathos, do you weep—and why, oh why do your wings droop as we hover above this fair star—which is the greenest and yet most terrible of all we have encountered in our flight? Its brilliant flowers look like a fairy dream—but its fierce volcanoes like the passions of a turbulent heart.

Agathos.—They are!—they are! This wild star—it is now three centuries since, with clasped hands, and with streaming eyes, at the feet of my beloved—I spoke it—with a few passionate sentences—into birth. Its brilliant flowers are the dearest of all unfulfilled dreams, and its raging volcanoes are the passions of the most turbulent and unhallowed of hearts.







